

MEMOIRS

OF A

Man of Pleasure,

OR THE

Adventures of Versorand.

VOLUME I.

THE FIFTH EDITION.



LONDON,

Printed for T. OSBORNE in Gray's Inn.

MDCCLI.

M E M O I R S

OF A

Man of Pleasure

OR THE

History of Noisy

VOLUME I

THE FIFTH EDITION



LONDON

Printed by W. Bodley in Great Britain

MDCCLXXII

TO
Samuel Foote, Esq.

THESE
MEMOIRS
OF A
MAN of PLEASURE,

Translated from the French,

Are Inscribed by

His most humble Servant,

The EDITOR.

456-204

TO
SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

THESE

MEMORIALS

OF A
MAN OF LETTERS

AND HIS WIFE

AND HIS CHILDREN

AND HIS GRANDCHILDREN

THE END



THE
ADVENTURES
OF
VERSORAND.
PART I.

♦♦♦♦♦ Y Father was a footman at the
♦♦♦♦♦ M age of fifteen, valet de chambre
♦♦♦♦♦ at twenty-five, a house-steward
♦♦♦♦♦ at thirty, at forty a banker, finan-
cier, usurer, and what else you please. In
fine, he died at seventy, and left my brother
and me about two millions.

Dumont my brother commenced Philoso-
pher, and became afterwards a Libertine. I was
at first a Rake, and at last turned Philosopher.
This is in short the substance of my Me-
moirs.

VOL. I.

A

I shall

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I shall not fill up a volume with the different steps that conducted my father from the Buffet to the Table, and from the Antichamber to the Closet; such narrations are tiresome to strangers, and mortifying to the persons interested.

My grandfather, John Verforand, was a petty vine-dresser of a village in the neighbourhood of Pâtis. The poor good man could scarce get bread by the sale of his wine, far inferior in quality, as every body knows, to the growth of Beaune. It was his good luck to be ruined, and tho' this may seem a paradox; it is nevertheless literally true.

The Collector of the Land-tax had an eye to a little vineyard belonging to my Grandfather, which he thought would do very well within his inclosure, and therefore proposed to purchase it at a very low price. Verforand constantly declined selling, on pretence that it was the only valuable thing he possessed, and that, were he deprived of it, he could no longer subsist. How poor an excuse to a Collector of the Taxes!

The vine-dresser remained unmolested for six months, but was thereafter prosecuted for the payment of the Land-tax (in which he had not been over-exact) for a trespass in the sale of his wine, and for prohibited tobacco, of which they had, in the night time,
thrown

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thrown a roll over the wall into his yard. He was dragged to gaol, where he remained six other months.

When it was thought he had been sufficiently punished, his little estate was sold, the Collector of the revenue had his vineyard at his own price, and the surplus of the money was consumed by costs and penalties, to which they had taken care to condemn him; so that by the recovery of his liberty, he was master of his own person, but of nothing else. Upon his arrival, not at his own house, for he had none, but in his village, he found his Wife and four Children dispersed in different parts, and at houses where the people had the good-nature to harbour them.

Love languishes under misery, which my Grandfather found by a melancholy experience. Conjugal affection had made no great progress in the heart of Madam Versorand. On the contrary, she had all along exclaimed bitterly against the Tax-gatherers and all their Supporters, but upon the arrival of her husband, her bad humour changed its object, and he was the sole but of her indignation.

A Wife is a treasure to a man who loves her, and death alone has a right to deprive him of it. A man seldom loses altogether a loving Wife; which was however the case with poor Versorand: for a little time after,

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Madam thought fit to set out upon her travels, without any company, and to seek her fortune elsewhere.

The Count Dangenone, Lord of the village, came to pass Easter holidays in it. The Curate did not fail to wait upon him, and to represent, with all the rhetoric he was master of, the wants of the Church, and the misery of the Poor. The Count heard all, believed little, promised a great deal, and gave nothing. He was an old soldier, whom experience had taught the tricks and abuses of the Clergy, and to whom Reason had furnished means to avoid them. He ordered the Curate to give him a list of the Poor of his estate, with a particular account of their necessities: he thereafter made them come to his house, and with his own hand distributed his charities.

My Grandfather had a just title to be ranked in the class of the Poor, and by the little he spoke, the Count was so pleased and affected, that he mentioned him to the Curate, who told him ingenuously the story of our misfortunes. M. Dangenone was moved with it, and thinking himself obliged to soften the fate of his vassal, he took him into his service in the quality of Gardener.

My Father, who was then about fifteen, filled the vacant place of Laquais to the Countess,

Countess, and my three Uncles, who composed the rest of the family, were destined to work in the Garden with the Father, till they were of age to be employed in something better; but all the three died two years thereafter.

Madam Verforand, having been informed that her husband had got a place, returned to share in his fortune. He was good and silly, as most husbands are; he received her with open arms, and all went well afterwards. From that day commenced the happiness of my family, and therefore it was not without just grounds I concluded that John Verforand's ruin was the source of his prosperity.

I think it proper to be a little particular in describing the persons of our benefactors; they have so considerable a part in the events of my history, that it is absolutely necessary to make them known, such as they were at that time.

The Count Dangemone had been a genteel well-made man as to his person, and, tho' now on the other side of sixty, there were such remains as confirmed the truth of his former personal merit. He had the art, by the delicacy of his taste, and magnificence of his dress, to set off to advantage the per-

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sonal imperfections which are the consequence of old age. He was in possession of a large estate, and he managed his affairs with as much regularity and œconomy as the least citizen; and, this only excepted, every thing else spoke him the man of quality: his manner, great and easy, his knowledge superficial, his wit lively and sparkling, a magnificent house, a delicate and sumptuous table, and above all, that apparent sweetness and shining politeness which characterise the man of distinction.

He was an old Courtier, who had learned every thing at Court, even to the trade of being an honest man, and joined to real merit that kind of it which is necessary in this mysterious country. He followed the torrent of pleasures, rather by habit than by taste, and he endeavoured to avoid excess, without making a parade of his prudence. He was lively and diverting, without degrading from that solid, grave, and essential air necessary upon certain occasions; and tho' in reality he had but little wit, he appeared to have a great deal. In fine, he made it evident, upon all occasions, that he would have been a man accomplished, had he but given himself time to reflect; which very seldom happened, according to the laudable practice of Persons in high life.

Accord-

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Accordingly, he every now and then retired to his country seats, where he gave himself up, without the dread of being thought ridiculous, to the pleasure of thinking, and of acting in consequence; to enjoy the satisfaction which the society of his wife afforded him, and, in short, to examine his domestick affairs, and to put them in that order which is alone capable of preserving the most opulent fortune.

So much for the Count. Let me beg leave now to say a word or two about the Countess. She was of a tolerable good family, ruined by the disasters to which the pretended Reformers of religion were exposed. A lady of quality of R*** took a fancy to her upon account of her graceful person, and after giving her a Convent education, brought her home to her own house in the quality of a *Complaisante*, a title which proud indigence hath invented as more polite than that of waiting-maid.

Her Benefactrix had lived for ten or twelve years in a perfect intimacy with M. Danery, President in the parliament of the same city of R***, a man of no great understanding, but vastly rich; qualities which seem in these our days to go hand in hand.

To find out ways and means of making the world agreeable to his only son, the sole

He unbosomed the grief that oppressed him to his Mistress, and had the comfort to find that she shared it with him. Proud of her Charms, she imagined that they had power enough to overturn the son's philosophy, since they had so long amused the father's folly. She desired to see this Insensible, and the President introduced him.

The young man came guarded by his innocence and modesty, and observed all the Lady's coquetish airs with great indifference, taking no notice of them, but to despise them. Such was the result of the conversation he had with his father upon the subject of that visit: he nevertheless promised to go again, which he accordingly did, and thereafter his visits became so frequent, that his father turned jealous, and told him of it without ceremony, accompanying his complaint with an order, by way of advice, not to visit the Lady any more.

He found in his son such a ready compliance with his orders, that he was extremely surprised. Fully persuaded that Love would never voluntarily submit to commands so contrary to its desires and interest, he imagined that his son's amours with the Lady were far advanced, and that his apparent submission was a concerted scheme betwixt her and him; for which reason, and to be

out of doubt, he questioned him so much, and so artfully, that he found this respectful son had no inclination to be his rival, and that the Demoiselle Deville (the name of the *Complaisante*) had found access to his heart.

The President had, 'tis true, heard that this *Complaisante* was of a family of distinction, but that was not enough for a man who thought the Governor of the Province would look upon it as an honour to be allied to his family.

To prevent his son's passion from hurrying him on to an unsuitable match, he resolved to give him an opportunity of committing with his Belle so many follies as are necessary to extinguish Love. No bad remedy.

He communicated his design to the Lady, who was piqued, with reason, that a *Complaisante* presumed to be handsomer than she; and nothing appeared to be more urgent than to get rid of her.

A poor waiting-maid has all the faults in the world, when she happens to have the prettiest face in the house. This poor girl displeased the Lady more and more, who nevertheless gave no signs of her aversion, but, on the contrary, seemed daily to advance in friendship and regard. They had frequent conversations together about Paris, and the delicious manner of living in that great city.

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The Lady, who had been educated there, made an exact review of all the different conditions, and artfully enlarged on that of the *Femmes gallantes*, i: e. *Ladies of gallantry*, drawing a picture of it (in which she covered nothing but the disagreeable) with all the bright and lively colours that her imagination could suggest.

Mademoiselle Deville was all admiration: the conversation often ran upon the same topics, and at last when the Lady thought she had wrought her up to a right cue, she told her that the young Danery was her conquest, and that, as he could procure her a brilliant fortune, it was her interest not to discourage him. The pleasure of having touched the heart of such a man, dazzled our little damsel, and even quite turned her head.

The young Gentleman was sent for, had all the liberty of entertaining his Mistress that he could desire, and his Love increased with such rapidity, that he soon proposed her leaving Madam D***, to go and pass some time at Paris, from whence, he promised, she should not return, but to take possession of the name of Madam Danery, with all its advantages. Tho' he was in a manner blinded with Love, yet he readily perceived that he could not marry a waiting-maid

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without exposing him to publick censure. The Demoiselle Deville, whose Ambition supplied the want of Love, consulted with her Mistress, who did not fail to advise her to consent to her Lover's proposal.

The day of departure was fixed, but an unforeseen difficulty had like to have spoiled all. The young man wanted to accompany his Mistress to Paris, and not to return without her. This was what the President desired, tho' he seemed quite averse to the project; and to carry on the farce, the Lady promised her mediation, and employed it with success; so that in a few days the two Lovers set out in a post-chaise. The President took care to give his son money enough to spend on his Belle, and he took care not to hoard it up.

The clandestine marriage was to be performed, as they passed, at Orleans. Our travellers were apprised by a very intelligent Laquais, about two leagues from this town, that they would find a great many officers in it, and if they intended to rest two days, as had been before resolved, his opinion was, that they should pass for husband and wife, to avoid disagreeable explications, and such steps as the curiosity of the military gentlemen might excite them to take; which might be attended with troublesome consequences.

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The Demoiselle made some difficulty at first, but at last consented. The rest of the way to Orleans they were settling a plan of conduct as married people, without encroaching, in the least, on the respect which she thought due to her maiden virtue. Danery promised every thing, without any intention to perform, and so they arrived.

The footman, who had gone before to bespeak and prepare a lodging, received them at the gate of the inn, and conducted them to a handsome apartment in a building separated from the principal house by a large court. Mademoiselle Deville was very well pleased that she was not obliged to lodge in the principal part of the inn, where she would have been exposed to the visits of the officers. But as the military gentlemen are always upon the *qui vive*, where a handsome woman is the case, she was requested to give her hour of admitting the officers, who were impatient to be allowed to pay her their respects; but would rather chuse, however, to deprive themselves of that pleasure, than to discommode her. She was a woman, consequently charmed with any opportunity of having a court paid to her, and therefore answered, that they did her a great deal of honour. Danery, who was not at all desirous that his Mistress should be seen,
added,

added, that she was fatigued with her journey, but that to-morrow she would be ready to receive every one who intended her the honour of a visit. This was not a little mortifying to the growing vanity of the future Madam Danery, and she could not pass it without complaining: but her Lover having represented his fears in a tender and affectionate manner, she was appeased, or at least believed she was so. They supped; and then the question was to go to bed. There were two beds in the room, one for the Lady, and the other for the Lover. When they were by themselves, Mademoiselle brought again upon the carpet her objections against lying in the same room with a man, and a little contest arose upon that head; but Danery urged so many tender and persuasive arguments, with so many protestations of a respectful behaviour, that they went to bed together very peaceably, and almost without perceiving that they did so. Thus a marriage was projected, concluded, and consummated in less than four hours.

The next day passed as the day after marriage always does. Danery thought himself the happiest man in the world; he adored Mademoiselle Deville, and had just obtained what he could desire. Can there be a more delicious situation? Their future marriage was the subject

ject of their conversation for some time, and they formed a thousand schemes as reasonable as their condition could permit, that is, very extravagant. They were busy in contriving how their house was to be fitted up, when word was brought that dinner was served, and that the officers who lodged in the same inn, flattered themselves with the pleasure of dining with them. This compliment from these military gentlemen was like a thunder-bolt to poor Danery. Mademoiselle Deville was his treasure, and he was the more afraid to lose it, as he knew the whole amount of its value. He certainly had not the least suspicion of his Mistress's fidelity, but the Military, he had heard, were very enterprising people, who, when a woman proved cruel, revenged themselves upon the husband for the wife's daring to do her duty. This was the thorn that stuck in the flesh.

The poor young man had been educated for the Bench, and consequently life to him was precious. He had now a sword by his side, but he was precisely like a savage who carries fire-arms, but knows not the use of them. A thousand distracting ideas came crowding upon him at once, and instead of answering the landlady, who came to acquaint him that dinner was served, he stood
like

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like a statue without life or motion. Mademoiselle Deville was young and pretty, and her being in deshabille, was no disadvantage to her charms, for which reason she took her resolution at once, and followed the landlady with a free and contented air. Danery had no thought of presenting her his hand to conduct her down stairs, but quite absorbed in melancholy reflexions walked behind. He now went thought the thorns of matrimony, of which he had the night before gathered the roses.

The Laquais had titled his master President ; he was saluted as such, and Madam, the President's Lady. The Officers, in number six, made themselves very merry with the confusion of the Magistrate. The Colonel, a bright young gentleman, used him with more politeness than the rest, and with that free air which is called easiness at Court, and impudence in the Hall. His petulance much diverted Mademoiselle Deville, who was nothing behind hand with him. After dinner they played ; the Colonel lost his money and desired a revenge, which was granted : thus they continued till the hour of supper, which Danery relished just as little as the dinner, and was mighty glad when the clock struck twelve, the hour of going to bed. Danery was flesh and blood, and the pleasures
of

of the night made him forget the vexations of the day. Tho' Mademoiselle had passed the time very agreeably, and could, no doubt, have wished for such another day's diversion, yet she voluntarily sacrificed the Officers to her Lover, whom a moment of reflexion had replunged into his former uneasiness, and therefore he laid hold of one of those critical minutes, in which Lovers can refuse nothing, to prevail with her to leave the inn; and, in effect, all were fast asleep when they departed. When the Officers were stirring, they were not a little surpris'd that a beardless Gownman should venture to give them the slip so artfully. They were very merry upon the subject among themselves, and took their revenge by publishing, wherever they went, how they had let such a delicious morsel slip through their fingers: and this made the story of the day.

Mademoiselle Deville continued to be the President's Lady till they arrived at Paris, and Danery, who was fond of acting the Husband, took care to make short journeys. At last they arrived in this great city, to which they had sent, four days before, the footman their marriage-maker, to provide lodgings. This intelligent emissary, foreseeing that, in inns, or furnished lodgings, his master would be often the hero of scenes of a
piece

piece with that of the inn at Orleans, wisely considered that the best thing he could do was to hire an empty apartment, which he fitted up genteely. When all was prepared, he went to wait for his master and mistress at the barrier, and conducted them to their new habitation. How agreeably was Danery surprised when he understood that all he saw belonged to him ! he made a present of every thing directly to Mademoiselle Deville, who now assumed her maiden name, as they had agreed. Their pretended marriage would have afforded subject of raillery in Paris, where the young President foolishly imagined that he was very well known ; but there was no more in it than that his father had some friends in this city. In order to prevent slander and detraction, he took furnished rooms for himself and his two servants, but he was scarce ever seen at his lodgings, and did not stir from Mademoiselle Deville's, who, in less than fifteen days, was quite tired of that uniform and retired way of living, so that Danery was obliged to show her Paris.

She was so struck with the grandeur of this magnificent city, that all appeared to her as prodigy at every step she made ; the riches, the beauty of the buildings, the clutter of coaches, their number and magnificence,
and

and that innumerable concourse of citizens, who seem to be all assembled together where a Provincial passes ; so little can he conceive that such a multitude of people inhabit the same place.

Danery was much less taken up with the pleasure of admiring so many beauties. He was in Love, and it is the peculiar property of that passion to make us heedless of what is not Love.

One day as they were at the opera, a moment after they were placed, who should enter their box but the Count de Chanville, who happened to be the Colonel they had seen at Orleans. What rencounter ! He rallied them, in a very gallant manner, upon their evasion, and taking advantage of the liberty to which former acquaintance seemed to entitle him, he asked, without ceremony, where they lived, offered to go and divert Madam, to find proper persons to play cards at her house, and, in short, to procure her all manner of amusements in his power. Danery did not want understanding, and tho' he was greatly perplexed and agitated at that instant, would have nevertheless extricated himself out of this labyrinth, but it was decreed that the Count de Chanville should every where perplex him. Mademoiselle Deville was not passionately fond of Danery ;

Danery; the hopes of being his wife, and sharing thirty thousand livres yearly rent with him, attached her very much. But Love and Interest gave way on this occasion to Coquetry. She refused to let it be known where she lived, but in a manner so polite and civil, that the Count took it for granted Danery was only Lover at Paris, though Husband at Orleans. When the opera was ended, he took his leave, but ordered their coach to be followed, and was informed where they lived before he went to bed.

The next day he made his first visit. A waiting-maid, whom Mademoiselle Deville had taken into her service upon the recommendation of her Milliner, and who had already lived with a Mistress of the Count's, knew him again, and told him the history of her Mistress, which she had learned from Danery's laquais, her slave, but for whom her regard was not equal to the pleasure of obliging a gentleman whose generosity she knew by experience. This discovery confirmed the Count's suspicions, and determined his manner of acting, and therefore when Madame la Presidente, who was retired with Danery, appeared, the Count presented himself with so good a grace, that she could not refuse him a kiss, which Danery took as he could.

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There are moments favourable for being well received of Ladies. A pretty woman does not shut herself up with a lover, either to play, or to quarrel, and this is so true, that when the door opens, there still is visible in her countenance an air of voluptuous liberty, capable of rendering the most timorous lover bold and daring. Happy is the man who can lay hold of those precious minutes, and happier he who is permitted to take the advantage of them.

This visit was short, but affecting. The Count, if I may use the term, billeted himself with the Lady, invited himself to supper next day, and all with an air so polite, and, at the same time, so decisive, that none durst oppose him.

The next day he sent to the waiting-maid his confidante, a gold snuff-box, which she presented to her mistress when she awoke. This girl was one of those unhappy females, whose unlucky stars condemn to serve others; who, by their wit and merit, are entitled to do for themselves, and whose address at length puts them in the case of being served by others in their turn.

She spoke of the Count de Chanville with so much fire, that Mademoiselle Deville acknowledged that nobleman's merit had not escaped her, but that she would not see him, because

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because his company was not agreeable to Monsieur Danery. So soon as the cunning waiting-maid had discovered that the Count's petulancy had pleased, she gave her tongue its full scope, and let her dear mistress see very plainly that she never could hope to be married to her lover; which she proved with such a train of solid reasons, that her Lady was forced to yield to the evidence of her unanswerable arguments. In speaking of the impossibility of her marriage with her lover, she gently advised her to abandon him for the Count, a man extremely rich, and infinitely more generous than a man of the robe. Mademoiselle Deville heard all, commanded her to carry back the snuff-box to its owner, and to beg he would not come to her house till he had permission.

What reflections did she not make when alone upon all that she had heard! and, to speak the truth, they were all to the advantage of her new lover.

Danery came in to awake her from her meditation, and he never came in a worse time. He shewed her letters which he had received that morning when he returned to his lodging. His father sent him word that his presence was absolutely necessary at R***, that he must set out directly, leaving some money with Mademoiselle Deville, who would not
have

have occasion for a considerable sum, because in a month's time he might return to Paris.

Love is headstrong. M. Danery had already resolved to write to his father that he could not possibly leave his dear Mistress, and he came to acquaint her of this, as a glorious resolution, adding upon this subject all that his passion could inspire, which were indeed pretty things, for he was very much in love.

Mademoiselle was more prudent. She represented to him that if, upon this occasion, he disobeyed his father, it would be enough to make him oppose their marriage. That she must certainly love him much in consenting to a separation from him for some time, since she thereby deprived herself of the only pleasure and satisfaction she had in the world; on which followed the most endearing caresses, and even tears were seasonably employed. Danery, transported with love, was in a moment determined to be gone. He supped *tete à tete* with his faithful Mistress, and set out next morning at five, requesting her, with all the ardour of a passionate lover, not to give way to her grief, but to endeavour, on the contrary, to dissipate it by any amusements she could think of.

The Count de Chanville was soon apprised of his rival's departure. He sent back his
gold

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gold snuff-box, and a pair of diamond earrings worth a thousand crowns; the whole was generously refused, and he laid them by for a more favourable occasion, which offered in a short time.

Handsome women know the value of their beauty, but not at all of money. Mademoiselle Deville had fifty louis in her purse, when Danery left her, which were dissipated in fifteen days. What was to be done? She was alone at Paris, without friends, without acquaintance, and no news from her lover. The Count, well informed, took the advantage of this situation to pay her a visit. He was attacked upon account of his presents, and made a brave defence. He proposed play, and very gallantly threw away a hundred louis, and all he had was a supper for his money. He returned several times upon the same footing. In fine, he parted with his money in so noble and grand a manner, that Mademoiselle began to take a pleasure in receiving it, and in about a month's time he was so well established in her Ladyship's good graces, that scarce durst any person pronounce the name of Danery.

All thoughts of living retired were now laid aside. Plays, assemblies, or airings, and suppers at the close of the day's diversion, took up all Mademoiselle's thoughts and time.

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The Count brought all Paris to see his new Mistress, who got acquainted with the Ladies of gallantry, and there was scarce a day but she might chuse out of twenty different parties of pleasure the most agreeable to her taste; what a delicious life!

About two years thereafter the Count de Chanville was killed one evening, in coming out of his Mistress's house, by a friend of his own, with whom he had had some words. A great many Gallants presented themselves to comfort the fair widow, but she declined all new engagements. Desirous of enjoying her liberty, she confined herself to the pleasure of entertaining her friends, and augmenting their number so far as she should think proper.

The Count Dangemone was one of those who pleased Mademoiselle Deville best and longest. After he had been for some time her friend, he became her lover, and as they were born to be joined in the bands of matrimony, she felt the same sentiments for him which warmed his heart towards her. He married her without ceremony, persuaded that nothing is more commendable or wiser, than to make the fortune of a woman whom one loves and is beloved by, and that lawful love often regulates the conduct of those whom a blind passion has plunged into error.

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He wrote to the province from whence Mademoiselle came, and by chance a discovery was made that she was descended of noble ancestors, which made his marriage with her not a bit the more agreeable with respect to his own sentiments; but upon account of the world, he was charmed that the birth of his wife was not as doubtful as her reputation.

The Lady had a large share of good sense, and she made use of it accordingly, by putting things upon a right footing the very first days of her marriage. She abandoned her ancient acquaintances, which she had made in her former state, and chose new ones worthy of her husband, and of her present condition.

In the mean while, young Danery was married in his own country, and had totally forgot Mademoiselle Deville. Having come to Paris with his true wife, he led her about in triumph where he could find any thing worthy of his curiosity. His equipage consisted of a coach and pair, a coachman and three footmen in a livery the more remarkable at Paris, as no body knew it.

One evening, as he was returning from supping in the suburbs of St. Germain, his coachman, after passing over the Pont-royal, drove along the Key to get by the wickets

at

at the quarter of Richelieu, where was the President's hotel. The Count Dangemone lived upon the Key of the Theatins, and was returning home with his Lady precisely at the same hour. The two coachmen presented themselves at one time to pass through the first wicket, and they were so engaged that one of the two must necessarily pull back, to let the other pass. The President's coachman, proud of driving a gilt berlin, called out to the other to clear the passage. The Count's coachman was at a loss what to do, but having remarked that he who spoke had neither whiskers nor a feather, he judged that he belonged to no Courtier, and therefore flatly refused to pull back. During this altercation the Countess, by the light of the flambeaux, knew Danery's livery, and told her husband it was a President of the parliament of R***; upon which the Count made one of his footmen get down and order the other coach to draw back. The President heard this order, and fancying himself to be as great at Paris, as his father was at the audience of the Parliament of R***, he put his head out of the coach to ask insolently with whom he had to do. The Count, who began to be angry, called out to him, *Thou shalt be told, but in the mean time order thy coachman to pull back*, which the Presi-

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dent refused, and thought he did enough when he ordered one of his people to go and notify his name to the other coach; but the laquais who was ordered to carry this message, being afraid of a drubbing bout, refused to obey. M. Danery got out of the coach and went to make his harangue himself. The Count believing that he had been named, and that the President came to beg pardon, thought civility obliged him to get out of his coach top. When he had heard his compliment, he told him with more contempt than anger, Go, my friend, and learn that a President like you is not a man to be respected in such a case as this; and at the same time regaling his nose with a few fillips, he ordered him to get into his coach again. Poor Danery was half dead, his people swore, his coachman drew back, and the Count's passed in triumph.

It is needless to represent how well pleased Madam Dangemone was to see Danery thus mortified. But the more he suffered, the more he thought himself obliged to be revenged. He thought the whole Noblesse affronted in his person, and therefore he drew up an ample memorial with every circumstance of his adventure, which he went to present to the King, not being acquainted with any of the Ministers. The memorial

was

was sent back to the Lieutenant of Police, who sent M. Danery this short message, that he must either go and beg the Count Dangemone's pardon, or depart for R*** in three days.

An order so precise stunned him : however, after a little consideration, he resolved to go to M. Dangemone's, which he accordingly did, and having notified his arrival, by order of the King, he was introduced into Madam's apartment, where the Count then was. How great was his surprise when, in the Countess, he discovered Mademoiselle Deville ! his vanity underwent a double torture. By good luck for him, the Count told him very coolly, and indeed coldly, *It is mighty well, Sir, make your excuse, and be wise in time to come*, which was accompanied with a farewell bow, after which the President was obliged to retire without being able to speak to his old Mistress.

Monfieur and Madame Dangemone had been married about ten years when my Father was received as Madam's laquais ; she was at that time about twenty-eight, and her husband sixty. The Count adored his wife, but his love for her was no longer so agreeable to her as could have been wished. She considered the disproportion of their ages, and

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dent refused, and thought he did enough when he ordered one of his people to go and notify his name to the other coach; but the laquais who was ordered to carry this message, being afraid of a drubbing bout, refused to obey. M. Danery got out of the coach and went to make his harangue himself. The Count believing that he had been named, and that the President came to beg pardon, thought civility obliged him to get out of his coach too. When he had heard his compliment, he told him with more contempt than anger, Go, my friend, and learn that a President like you is not a man to be respected in such a case as this; and at the same time regaling his nose with a few fillips, he ordered him to get into his coach again. Poor Danery was half dead, his people swore, his coachman drew back, and the Count's passed in triumph.

It is needless to represent how well pleased Madam Dangemone was to see Danery thus mortified. But the more he suffered, the more he thought himself obliged to be revenged. He thought the whole Noblesse affronted in his person, and therefore he drew up an ample memorial with every circumstance of his adventure, which he went to present to the King, not being acquainted with any of the Ministers. The memorial

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without being deficient in that gratitude which she owed to a man who had made her fortune, she sought after pleasures the more agreeable to her, as they did not in the least diminish the Count's happiness, who had no suspicion of his wife's fidelity : happy husband !

She had taken into her service, about two years before, a tall, strapping young fellow, for her laquais, who was, perhaps, the only one in Paris who drank no wine. This quality of water-drinker presents I don't know how many agreeable ideas to a woman's imagination, and not one of them escaped Madam Dangemone. Having duly examined her footman, she found him lovely as to his person, tolerably well as to his education, and of a sweet disposition. All these things duly considered, she settled matters so with him, that he was her laquais all day, and her husband all night, without any suspicion or discovery by the Count, or any of the family.

Saint-Pierre (the name given to my Father) had the good fortune to please his mistress very much, and his comrade, who was beginning to lose the relish of his Lady's favours, saw with pleasure that my Father was of a lovely figure, and hoped to find in him a successor, who would exempt him of a duty of which he was now heartily tired.

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The little Saint-Pierre was taught to read and write, to play upon the violin, and to dance, and, in a short time, he could play well enough for an anti-chamber, dance tolerably, and to these accomplishments he joined that silliness which is necessary for a young laquais who serves a pretty woman.

His comrade entertained him often upon the charms of their common mistress, without letting him into the secret how he came to know them. My Father was young, and such conversations not only raised his curiosity, but likewise certain desires, which hitherto he had been unacquainted with; his eyes were constantly fixed on his lovely mistress, and opportunities were not wanting to glut his ravished sight from a woman who, persuaded that her whole body was a masterpiece of nature, would have willingly shewed it quite naked, could she have done it with decency.

Poor Saint-Pierre was soon passionately in love with his Lady, and made his melancholy case known to his comrade, who proposed his conveying himself, in the night time, into Madam's bed-chamber, and to take the Count's place, who sometimes lay in his Lady's bed. The enterprize seemed too perilous to my Father, and he rejected the proposal; upon which his comrade, in order

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to encourage him, confessed that he had the key of the Lady's room, that he went to it every night, and that he would willingly lend it him; adding, that there was no manner of risk of his being discovered, as Madam seldom spoke in the night time.

My Father was young, without experience, and did not consider the danger to which such a rash attempt exposed him. The pleasure of enjoying a fine woman, whom he adored, was stronger than his fears, and vanity gave the finishing stroke to his folly, by representing that he who wore her livery was to be admitted into her arms as a lover. The night approached, the key was delivered to him, with proper instructions how he was to govern himself, which he exactly observed in every point; and, in short, entered the room, where darkness reigned, and was going softly towards the bed, when he perceived the Countess with a candle in her hand coming out of her toilet-closet. Let any one, if they can, here draw the picture of my Father's confusion.

He was in a Laquais's *deshabille*, that is, in his shirt. How terrible his situation when he considered that he had come into his Lady's bed-chamber at an unseasonable hour, without light, and found her almost naked to receive the person whom she expected. She
asked

asked him, in a tone capable of making him tremble from head to foot, what he wanted. The poor creature, with down-cast looks, fell upon his knees, asking forgiveness of his temerity in a manner that diverted her much. When he said all that fear and grief suggested, Madam Dangemone told him: At this rate, Mr. Saint-Pierre, I find that you imagine I lie with your comrade, and that you would be glad to obtain the same favour. Well, shut the door, and let us see how you will behave. I hope, said he, transported with joy, to your Ladyship's satisfaction. And he proved what he said in so convincing a manner, that he remained afterwards sole possessor without a rival.

This preference, which, in the Lady's account, ought to have made her ancient favourite quite mad and desperate, gave him the greatest joy: however, he acted artfully enough the desperado. The Lady having questioned his successor with that cunning, of which a pretty woman is always mistress when she resolves to make a discovery, he confessed that his comrade was not at all grieved with his being supplanted: three days after he was found dead in his bed.

This death, which did not seem to be natural, made my Father very uneasy for some time, but he was young and amorous, plea-

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sure dispelled the gloomy cloud, and he continued in the uninterrupted fruition of his felicity.

The count Dangemone, naturally of a benevolent disposition, far from finding fault with his wife's bestowing daily new presents upon my Father, often added to them, and it was he himself who first proposed my Father's throwing off his livery, and commencing Madam's Valet de Chambre, an attendant which she had not till then in her service, and a post erected only in favour of Saint-Pierre, who resumed the name of Versorand, without renouncing the privileges so long attached to the place of First laquais.

He always took care to chuse successors ugly enough to prevent any ideas of change in my Lady, and silly enough to take no advantage of any good-will she might have for them.

A little time after he was in possession of his new dignity, the Count Dangemone died at the age of fourscore. He left an estate of sixty thousand livres a year to his widow, and a great deal of ready money, which she did not think proper to let the heirs know any thing of.

Though she had no multiplicity of affairs upon her hands, but what a woman might manage, yet as it is the custom among persons
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of quality to have intendants, she thought she had as good a right as any to that piece of grandeur. My Father found this post to his liking, for which reason he was directly put in possession of it, with a genteel apartment, a salary of four thousand livres yearly, and a coach to attend him upon all occasions; and all this without prejudice or regard to the presents to which his quality of sole husband might entitle him. He made it his business to lend money to those who had occasion, at interests agreeable to the desire he had of becoming rich; and this trade he carried on with great success, having the command of fifty thousand crowns ready cash which the late Count had scraped together.

Unfortunately for the people, there were daily societies of financiers forming. My Father was rich, but little known. He longed to get into the management of the King's revenues, being persuaded that they were as lucrative, as he by whom they were employed is powerful; but he durst not present himself upon any such account.

M. D*** was at that time Comptroller-General, he formerly thought Madam Dangemone very lovely, he even told her so, and had ever since esteemed her. She was, perhaps, the only woman who had refused the splendid offers which that Minister made to

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those who had the honour to please him. She made him a visit, and presented my Father, who, in eight days time, was named a Member in one of the most advantageous treaties, with assurance of being always protected. Thus my Father entered on the management of the King's revenues, with a much better protection than capacity: a prevailing custom in all ages.

Then it was that Madam Dangemone, who approached her fiftieth year, fancied that she ought to retire from the world. She sent one morning for my Father, and in her closet made him the following discourse, too singular not to be repeated word for word.

My dear Versorand, it is now twenty years that you have possessed my heart, and I have for so many years done amiss. I waited till you should become inconstant before I listened to the voice of Reason, which enjoins my retreat. I see that Gratitude in you supplies the place of Love, but I am resolved to free you for ever from what must be a disagreeable constraint. The good I have done you gives me great pleasure, and I wish your fortune may be proportioned to your merit, which, in my opinion, cannot be so fully recompensed as it deserves. It is now time that you think of forming a solid settlement, and giving yourself up to the pleasure of be-
getting

getting heirs. I shall endeavour to procure you advantages capable of indemnifying you for the loss of my presence and company. Consider what is best for you to do. Here is my plan. You shall have, in your hands, my fifty thousand crowns, for which you shall give me your obligation before a notary public, and return that money when you think proper. You shall continue in the receipt of my rents, and pay me from time to time what money I have occasion for in the Convent of ****, to which I intend to retire; the surplus shall be yours. Every three months I shall give you a general discharge upon two conditions. This first is, that you shall never see me more; the second, that you shall marry, if not by choice, at least out of complaisance to me. Here is my general procuration which I give you. And in so saying, she rose from her chair, embraced my Father with tears in her eyes, went down to her coach which was waiting, and ordered the coachman to drive to the Abbey of **** from whence she never after stirred.

It is no easy matter to describe the situation of mind in which my Father found himself. Never man was more perplexed; his astonishment was so great that he remained as a statue in the room after the Countess was gone, and scarce perceived her leaving it.

When

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When he came a little to himself, Heavens, cried he, what a strength of mind ! is this the woman whom I have adored for twenty years, and who loved me yesterday as much as the first day ? What do I say, it is scarce four hours that, giving herself up without reserve to my fond caresses, in a transport of pleasure she swore she would love me to the last moments of her life. Ah ! without doubt she wants to make a trial of my love and the power she has over me. Is it possible, that after twenty years commerce, there should be occasion to put a man's heart to such trials ? He then took up a paquet lying on the table, which he judged to be the procuration the Countess had mentioned. He found in it the picture of his Lady in a gold snuff-box, all her jewels, the greatest part of her trinkets, and the procuration, in due form, for the management of her estate.

The most covetous Financer in nature has always some intervals of sensibility and honour. Though my Father had much at heart the raising his fortune, he did not chuse to take the advantage of so considerable a present, and sent it back to the Countess, who received it without saying a word. He begged for permission to speak to her, but was refused.

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He sold the furniture, the horses and equipages, excepting only one coach with the arms of the family, which he had made use of, in quality of intendant, to do honour to a house, to which he belonged in a manner so advantageous for him. The Countess being informed that he made use of a coach with her arms and servants clad in her liveries, sent him word that he must be now, she thought, in a condition to have an equipage of his own; which he accordingly set up. As every thing in life is subject to change, his love for that Lady was soon extinguished, and he contented himself with a grateful acknowledgement of her favours to the day of his death. He resolved to give her proofs of his gratitude upon all occasions, but had no thoughts of marrying. Madam Dangemone saw with some concern that he did not execute her last orders, and when self-love awaked in her (on a supposition that it ever is asleep in the female sex) she imagined that he who had once loved her could never love another.

My Father wrote to her one day that he alone of all who had had the honour to belong to her, was happy; a thing not quite just: and that, with her permission, he would willingly take upon him to reward her domestics.

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I must say, to the honour of my Father, that he had already executed what he proposed, before he mentioned it. The Countess was a Lady of a high spirit; she immediately drew up a state of the annuities which she intended should be settled on her people. My Father had allowed them something more; and proposing to her the augmentation, the Countess consented, thanking him for the obliging offer he had made of taking that expence upon himself, and at the same time, signified her displeasure to understand that he had little or no thoughts of marriage, and that if he had not more regard to her last commands, she would be obliged to break off all correspondence with him. The fear of displeasing this Lady determined him: about a month after he married the daughter of Monsieur ***, Farmer-general, who brought him a hundred thousand crowns, with the hopes of as much more at her Father's death, which happened two years thereafter.

The Countess heard of this marriage with a satisfaction which was very astonishing, and wrote a congratulatory letter to my Father, inclosing in it the bond for fifty thousand crowns, he had given her, desiring he would make use of that money to purchase the title and place of Secrétaire du Roi; which
he

he did in about a week, and put it in his Father's name, who was not capable of any thing else.

The young Lady Verforand likewise received a present from the Countess, no less than the jewels which her husband had returned to the Lady who owned them. Thus it is that never any thing is lost by being generous.

I was born a year after the marriage, and Madam Dangemone was my godmother by proxy, giving me, in pure gift, a house worth twenty thousand crowns, that belonged to her in her own right, and to which her husband's heirs had no pretensions.

This worthy Lady lived twenty years and some months in her retirement. My Mother visited her often, and was very much in her good graces, without ever being able to obtain permission that my Father should accompany her.

A year before her death, she made me come to her Parloir, and gave me lessons for my conduct so wise and judicious, that I have remembered them ever since. She had never failed to give my Father discharges for her whole rents, though she never expended above twenty thousand livres a year, including the pensions of her servants; so that he gained by her estate about forty thousand
livres.

livres yearly. She desired to see all her discharges before she died, and I carried them to her. She took a note of them, and then returned them.

She ordered a Notary to come and make her will, in which my Father was named Executor, with a present of twenty thousand crowns to be paid out of her effects, and the remainder was for the poor in her estates. She gave me with her own hand, that day, a ring which she had from the Count de Chanville worth about two thousand crowns, telling me that she could have wished it had been in her power to make me more valuable presents. Next day she sent for my Mother, whom she caressed more than usual, and gave her a general discharge to my Father, from the day he was made her intendant. Her benefactions and great age (for she was now more than seventy) entitled her to give lessons to all our family. She took the advantage of this her indisputable right, to exhort my Mother to love her husband above all things, in whose praise she spoke in so exalted yet natural a manner, that my Mother could not restrain her tears. She likewise related the history of her passion for my Father, and consequently that of our fortune. This confession greatly surprised my Mother, and augmented her esteem of this virtuous Lady.

Lady. The minutest circumstances were as present in her memory as forty years before, which was a sufficient proof that she had always loved my Father, and in this we must admire the force of her Virtue and Reason, which had inspired her with the project of her retreat, and made her continue in it for twenty years, in the constant execution of the same project. From that day she shut herself up in her apartment, and would receive no more visits. In fine, she died six months after, with sentiments so pious and fervent, that the whole Convent was more edified than grieved, though she was loved by every one in it. This is what I call a Christian Heroine.

That a man is brought up in piety, and lives and dies in it, he does well ; and though it is no extraordinary thing to find such a man, yet I praise him. That another looks upon the principles of conduct which he is taught in his youth, as ridiculous prejudices of education ; that his repeated disorders carry him often to the brink of precipices ; and that, in fine, by a particular grace of the Almighty, he gets into the paths of virtue ; that he pursues them constantly, without being discouraged by the obstacles he may meet with, and that he dies in these new sentiments, after a loose life ; this man is a Hero, I admire him.

But

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But what do I say? where am I hurried by the remembrance of the death of our benefactrix? How monstrous a thing is it, will our Pulpit Orators say, for a Romance-writer to take up our trade! why not? since they are allowed to make sermons, which, in detached parts, might very properly be inserted in romantic writings, these last have a right to draw pictures, descriptions, and strokes of criticism proper to adorn sermons.

But I return to the thread of my story. The same year we lost the good man John Verforand, my Grandfather, who, in the language of our family, was the Count Dangelone's old gardener, but, in the opinion of the public, a counsellor, King's secretary, &c. I took this post, because my intention was to do nothing. Madam Verforand died three months after her husband, and her death had almost brought my Father to his grave, because he was extremely attached to her.

But let us turn our eyes from such dismal objects, and take a view of what is most brilliant in fortune and folly. I had a brother, lovely enough, and who would have been still more so, had he been less a Philosopher. He divided his whole time between the pleasure of reading particular descriptions of the follies to which human nature is liable,
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and that of censuring those which were committed under his eyes. As to the rest, he was a very honest man, a respectful son, and an affectionate brother. Nothing at that time gave him pleasure but what was agreeable to me. Our tastes, however, were very different. I had been brought up as the representative of the family, that is to say, spoiled from my infancy, and it was easily to be found out. I loved the world, and noisy pleasures. With a tolerable figure, the talents of voice and dancing, and a great deal of money, I thought myself a very pretty fellow, and my actions were founded upon that opinion. My whole attachment was to pleasure, it was the only object of my pursuits, and yet I found it no where, because it was become habitual to me. My taste was very early blunted, or, rather, I never had any. As I was unfortunately too rich, I was, in a manner, necessitated to commit many extravagances, and I was not to become wise, but by the assistance of disappointments and repentance. I was impertinent in a pretty eminent degree, but it was not my fault. Let people of quality do themselves justice. They continually complain of the arrogance of Financers, and yet it depends wholly on them to check it. Let them not allow us to be useful to them, nor
court

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court our friendship and alliance. If the man displeases them, let his money do so too. Let them not daily make parties of pleasure with the Financer, who always defrays the expence, and very often is despised after he has emptied his pockets to indulge their extravagance. This was precisely my case. I had no other friends but persons of quality of my own age, whose fathers were a little close-fisted. Nevertheless, we enjoyed all sorts of pleasures and diversions at my expence ; so that if their company was honourable to me, mine was profitable to them. I thought the' one compensated the other, and that I ought to be regarded as much as they. The desire of being thought a man of consequence in the world, is a distemper as universal as fevers, and whoever reads these Memoirs will find that I had many fits of it.

My Father had begun, at fifteen, the work of his fortune, and he resolved that his children, at the same age, should enter upon the enjoyment of it. I had by this means got rid, very early, of preceptors, and governors, the present plagues of youth, and their future happiness. I was then in my course of Philosophy, and a Repetitor was the only overseer about me, my Father having reserved to himself the direction of my conduct,

duct, which he took no great care to inspect into.

I had made acquaintance at college with the young Count Doran, son to the Marquis Doran, a man of the first rank and quality, and extremely rich. Paternal fondness did not permit the Marquis to send his children to any distant place for their education; they were brought up under his own eyes. His son, whom I often visited, loved me very much, and presented me to his father as his dearest friend. The father received me politely, and in a little time I was looked upon as a child of the house.

I had an opportunity of being acquainted with Mademoiselle Doran, my friend's sister. An old Gouvernante, who had no other merit but that of having brought up my lady her mother, had the charge of the daughter's education. She fancied that I was in love with the young Lady, and informed her parents, who ordered their son to tell me, that I must not converse so often with his sister; upon whom I had then no plot, nor any thoughts of love.

When one is unconfined, and has his pockets full, one is seldom in love at the age of fifteen. I often tasted of pleasures, the more agreeable to the petulancy of my age, as I the less expected them. In one word, I enjoyed,

joyed, and bought with good well-coined specie, a dispensation from the drudgery of a whining, sighing lover; and I was so accustomed to this kind of pleasure, that I had no notion of acting the formal lover, and of taking up more time in getting into the good graces of one woman, than was necessary to disgust me with a great many.

Mademoiselle Doran was then in her sixteenth year. She was tall, well shaped, with blue eyes, and a complexion exquisitely fair, with the advantage of jet black hair. She had some wit, and a great volubility of tongue. She danced well, sung better, and touched the harpsichord to admiration. Her temper was sweet and gay, her character excellent, and her manner easy and engaging.

I had seen all this without taking much notice of it, the strong propensity that drove me on to libertinism, had smothered the sentiments which Mademoiselle Doran ought to have inspired me with : but the remonstrance that had been lately made me, with respect to her, opened my eyes. I promised my friend never to be in love with his sister, and that very moment my heart gave my tongue the lie. What difference betwixt a lover and a rake ! I was already better pleased with what I felt for this young Lady, than I ever had been with all the best-turned passionate

passionate declarations of love which I had received. I became more assiduous in my visits to Madam Doran, which she did not take amiss, because I appeared more indifferent about her daughter. Fathers and Mothers are easily imposed upon in cases of this kind.

At first, the pleasure of seeing Mademoiselle Doran made me quite happy, but I soon perceived that love is never content. I languished for an opportunity of declaring my passion. I made my case known to my friend, who, more concerned for my happiness than the honour of his family, promised to use his interest with his sister in my favour. Girls, though ever so young and unexperienced, are generally taught by nature to read in our countenances the effects of their charms, and consequently are seldom loved without knowing it. She was not at all displeased to be informed of it by her brother, but would have been better pleased, if I had told her of it myself.

Without gaining the Governante there were no hopes of speaking to her in private. Some presents gained that point. I had the happiness of telling Mademoiselle that I adored her, and of seeing that my declaration was not disagreeable; and at length she crowned my felicity, by declaring that she

loved me as much as I loved her. Some time after, the Governante had a dangerous fit of sickness ; her Confessor ordered her to declare to Madam Doran that I was in love with her daughter, and that she had procured me several times an opportunity of seeing her. He was exactly obeyed. A Priest in those terrible moments leads, with a thread, how and where he will, the most intractable mortal. Madam Doran ordered that her gate should be no more open for me ; and I was deprived of the pleasure of seeing her daughter. My friend came often to condole with me, brought me letters from his sister, and carried back my answers. Our epistolary commerce continued long, and I found it insipid. I solicited Angelia (the name of Mademoiselle Doran) to grant me an interview. In her answer she pressed me not to think of it, representing all the dangers to which we would be exposed, should she grant my request. She judged right : I was known by all the servants, and besides, there was a necessity of going through her mother's chamber to get at hers. What likelihood was there to surmount so many obstacles without some unlucky accident ?

Which is to be esteemed the happiest of two lovers, he who has not as yet been able to touch his Mistress's heart, who hopes that,

that, sooner or later, she will reward his constancy with a proper return, and in the mean time sees her freely ; or he who is blessed with reciprocal love, but cannot read his happiness in the eyes of his fair Mistress ? This is a problem to be resolved by whoever will attempt it.

After six months solicitations on my part, and refusals on Angelia's, I began to be a little easy upon my not seeing her, and making frequent excursions in gallantry endeavoured to indemnify myself, for what I had suffered upon her account, with some of the fair sex who had no such untractable Argusses about them. One day chance conducted me to Mass at St. Sulpice, where the first object that struck my eyes was the beautiful Angelia at her mother's side. They could not, in good manners, but return my salute, this they did ; but civility did not oblige them to speak to me, and this they did not. An expressive look from the dear Angelia told me more than a long conversation, and the pleasure of seeing her at the Church, awaked in me the desire of seeing her elsewhere ; so that I renewed my instances, which, for some time, were as fruitless as before.

In fine, Angelia sent me, one morning, the following billet.

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She who will deliver this billet, is a person of confidence, to whom you may speak without reserve. I love you, I must see you, this is all I know, it is your business to settle the rest.

Mistress Dupont, a trinket-woman, brought me this billet, which she would not deliver to any but myself, and without witnesses: she spoke of nothing, while my valet de chambre was present, but India muslins and handkerchiefs, and, when he was retired, did her message. I was much embarrassed. Monsieur Doran had lately removed to another house, of which I had no knowledge, having never been in it; but Mrs. Dupont gave me so exact a description of it, that I could not mistake my way. She told me that about two o'clock I must go to her house, in a hackney-coach, where I was to be dressed in womens cloaths, and should, thus disguised, go to Monsieur Doran's, where I would find a new Swiss porter who did not know me; that I should ask for one Mademoiselle Dupuis, a waiting-maid, and, instead of going up to her chamber at the top of the little stairs, I should stop at the first floor, and go into a garde-robe which I would find open, and of which I was to lock the door and wait till Mademoiselle Doran came to me.

If

If the most punctual and scrupulous exactitude can assure the success of an enterprise, never man had a better title to success than I. My directions were pointed, and I as pointedly followed them, and chance ordered it so, that, at first, things went according to my wish. I was already got into the house, and by every thing that presented to my view, I saw that Mrs. Dupont's description was exact. I found two doors open instead of one that I sought, which put me to a nonplus; happily I bethought me that in the place where I was to be lodged, there was a couch of India stuff. The fear of being discovered made me venture, at all hazards, to go into one of the closets which I saw open, where I perceived every thing that I was told of; but instead of locking myself in to wait for Mademoiselle, I was obliged to get out again directly, having perceived her father asleep on the couch, which my Love destined to a quite different use.

The sight of Monsieur Doran dispelled all the agreeable ideas with which my imagination was filled. Fear and embarrassments succeeded with such rapidity, and possessed my mind so absolutely, that I thought no longer but of the folly I had been guilty of, in attempting an enterprise so difficult in its execution.

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My love was what occasioned my uneasiness. Without the regard which I had for Mademoiselle Doran I should not have been very much troubled. But as nothing but what was disagreeable could be the consequence of my being discovered, I was at a loss whether I should directly leave the house, as reasonably I ought, or if I should listen to the voice of Love, which advised me to remain a little longer. If Monsieur Doran was not in a deep sleep, and that the noise I made should have awaked him, I had frequented his house long enough to be known notwithstanding my disguise, and if that should be the case, how must I behave. While I was taken up with these distracting reflexions, I heard, on one side, the sleeper beginning to awake, and, higher up, a woman, whom I imagined to be Madam Doran, giving orders to a footman to go and tell the porter to shut the gate, which she saw open. It was now I thought myself undone without recourse. I resolved to get out of the house, if possible, before they had time to shut me in. On going away, I could not hinder myself from throwing an eye into the other closet, and whom should I see, but Mademoiselle Doran, who waited there till I was pleased to put myself under her protection. I flew to her, and the door was that moment shut.

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The pleasure of seeing her made me soon forget all my alarms, and I gave myself entirely up to my happiness. The *tête à tête* gives an incredible indulgence to lovers, they lay aside the ridiculous decencies, by which they are tied down to treat one another with a sort of cold indifference, without granting to the only object of their wishes and desires any preference over those for whom they are under no manner of concern. But that liberty, sweet as it may seem, is nothing compared to that of a rendezvous so long wished for, and always protracted by a constant constraint, and at last contrived and procured by love itself. I clasped my dear Angelia in my arms, and gave her a thousand kisses before I spoke one word. She had no time to be terrified with the vivacity of my transports, but began with suffering and ended by sharing in them. She conducted me afterwards into her chamber, and we left the garderobe as a place not safe, because her waiting-maid, now at dinner, had a key to it. She might have occasion to come to it, and if she found it bolted, that precaution would occasion a surprise, and as from thence one naturally passes to enquire into the object that gave rise to it, her researches would have much perplexed us.

Scarce had we time to inform one another of what regarded our meeting, when we heard Madam Doran's voice in her daughter's anti-chamber. I was wonderfully sensible that there was a necessity of giving her entrance, which encreased my apprehensions for Angelia, whose honour, by my presence, was justly to be suspected, and her crime in all appearance not at all equivocal.

Embarrassing situations are attended with this inconvenience, that they throw us into so terrible a perplexity of mind, that we cannot coolly think of means to extricate ourselves, but rather give ourselves up to tormenting reflexions, as if they were proper remedies for the evils we are oppressed with. The case is different with women, particularly where love is concerned. A moment suffices to see the danger, and to take the precautions necessary to screen themselves from the impending blow. Angelia made me creep under her bed. This done, she made fast the alcove, which happily was surrounded with a balustrade that prevented people from observing what was under the bed. She then opened the door to her mother, who ordered her to get dressed as quickly as possible, because there was an assembly and a concert at her aunt's, where they had occasion for her to sing.

A hoarse-

A hoarseness, head-ach, vapours, and many other disorders, more commodious to be alledged as excuses, upon occasion, than troublesome when felt, were the pretences which the young lady made use of to excuse her not going, but to no purpose; she was obliged to get herself dressed in a hurry, and Madam Doran assisted at her toilette; after which they went out together.

Till that instant the presence of my dear Angelia had indemnified me for the uneasiness of my situation; or rather, I did not so much as think of it. I even totally forgot the danger to which I was exposed by the transporting pleasure of assisting at an undressing, the more unreserved, as it was to be supposed none were present but her mother. A little opening or sent in the alcove, in which I was imprisoned, gave me an opportunity of viewing a thousand beauties which were till then unknown to me. But Angelia departed, my ravishing prospects were over, and my fears recommenced. She wanted to carry the key of her chamber along with her, but the waiting-maid having desired it, in order to set her toilette and other things to rights, the mother approved of the maid's proposal, who was, by that means, left alone with me in the apartment. She was indeed for a quarter of an hour employed

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in putting every thing in its proper place, and I fancied that, at every time she came near the alcove, she would certainly discover me. Her going out and locking the door made me imagine that she had certainly seen me, and was gone to call for assistance to seize upon the thief, caught, in a manner, in the fact; but I was deceived, for she returned in a moment, and left the door open. She seated herself on a sofa at one side of the chimney, and precisely opposite to the sent through which I had seen what passed in the chamber. She sung, agreeably enough, some pretty little songs, which would have diverted me much at any other time. After that she adjusted her garters, and shewed me a leg which many ladies would have been glad of, and by the shape of it one might judge that what was above it could not be despicable. After she had adjusted the lower parts, she went higher, and set some things to rights upon her bosom, by which means I had an opportunity of seeing large and round breasts. After having covered them, in a manner, however, that left them still visible, she laid herself down with a seeming indolence as if she intended to take a nap.

She was scarce stretched along when in comes a tall, well-shaped young fellow, young Doran's laquais; upon which she

started up and acted very dexterously the part of a woman surprised. She seemed to be very much offended at his intrusion; he, with very submissive and tender expressions, begged to be excused, and then proceeded to a declaration of love, more passionate, to speak the truth, than genteel, but nevertheless very expressive.

People in high life, when they speak to a lady of love, kiss her hand, till she is so animated as to permit them to kiss her mouth. Those of the lower class are more expeditious, and consequently less dupes. This gallant sealed every word with a kiss on his Mistress's mouth; and this way of speaking seemed to be to her taste, though she often told him that she could not bear such freedoms: and this she repeated so many times with a seeming seriousness, that, upon his retiring to a little distance from her, I judged he was resolved to push things no farther. But, it seems, he knew better, and only left her with an intention to make fast the door. The damsel got up to hinder him, and absolutely insisted upon its being left open, but he laughed at her pretensions. They disputed as lovers usually do for some minutes, and even fought gallantly, without a possibility of determining on whose side the advantage lay. At last the Belle seemed to

gain the victory. Her lover opened the door in a most submissive manner; and this was done with a view; for he took out the key, threw it on the toilette, and shut the door directly. It was in that moment the waiting-maid seemed to be really much irritated. She gave him most injurious language, such as is common to females in her station. In moments of vivacity, reflexion ceases, affected politeness disappears, it is the heart that speaks, the character is laid open. In all probability the gallant was no novice, for he seemed not at all to mind the anger of his Mistress, nor answered her one word. What could he say to her? It was no time to amuse himself; besides, he had no reason to be in a surly humour.

He took his Belle in his arms, smothered her almost with kisses, in which all the advantage seemed to be his, but she was too much animated not to participate in the pleasure. Notwithstanding the involuntary resistance which she made, he carried her to the sofa, and disposed himself in such a manner that she could not stir. A moment after, all her wrath was dissipated, and gave place to sentiments of love the most lively, brisk, and transporting. The pleasures of these lovers were mutually felt, in a successive progress, with such a voluptuous rapidity,
that

that they seemed to be overloaded with the weight of a felicity too high for nature to support. They sacrificed decency, constraint, and every obstacle, to the full gratification of their mutual desires, and contributed to one another's happiness in every thing that might heighten it.

What a scene is the felicity of others to a man whom the prospect of his own has reduced to so melancholy a situation as mine was! What foolish reflexions did I make, and yet pardonable in my present condition. I fancied to myself that these two domestics insulted me, and that the accomplishment of their happiness was the ruin of mine. Nay farther, I was tempted to believe that Angelia jilted me, and that her woman was in the plot. In fine, I uttered to myself a thousand foolish things far less diverting than what I had seen.

A coach came rattling into the court, which I imagined brought Mademoiselle Doran with her mother. The two lovers were of the same opinion, and left the room; but we were all three deceived, for it happened to be Monsieur Doran come from the opera, and who being informed that Madam Doran was at a concert at his sister's house, ordered his coachman without stopping to drive there.

To the concert succeeded a supper, and to the supper a ball, which lasted till six next morning. Never night was so terrible as that which I passed under this bed, sometimes tormented with the thoughts of being discovered, and with the notion of being played upon, and at other times with the hopes of being amply indemnified by Angelia for the misery I had undergone upon her account.

At length she returned with her mother, who, as bad luck would have it, having no inclination to sleep, saw her daughter undress and go to bed, and then sat down to rest herself on the couch where others had, the day before, fatigued themselves with so much pleasure. She told Angelia a thousand flattering things upon the brilliant figure she had made, both in the concert and ball. The pleasure of hearing my dear Mistress thus commended softened the horrible confinement which I had so long bore, and my whole thoughts were taken up with the happiness of being so near the person in the world for whom I had the greatest value. At eight o'clock Madam Doran observing that her daughter answered no more, believed she was fallen asleep, and then retired.

The waiting-maid, after she went out, had orders to go to bed. Mademoiselle Doran, when her mother and maid were gone,

rose

rose from her bed and locked her door: a very necessary precaution upon this occasion, and which did not appear to be extraordinary from her being in the daily practice of doing so. This dear girl, who loved me to distraction, had suffered as much as I, during sixteen hours, that I had lain stretched along upon the boards under her bed, without being able almost to turn myself, and under an absolute restraint from moving in the least but when I was alone in the chamber, which had been my case from the time which brought Monsieur Doran from the opera, to the arrival of the ladies; otherwise I believe I should have been Love's martyr, not in, but under my Mistress's bed. The necessity she was under to put on an air of freedom and gaiety at a time when she was, as it were, in pangs of anguish and sorrow, reduced her to a frightful condition. But what is all that when one loves! She approached me trembling, and after helping me to get out of my prison, asked me pardon with so much submission and grief, as if I had not suffered but out of mere complaisance for her, and that it had been in her power to terminate my slavery sooner. She made a great fire, of which I had very great occasion, and was a little revived by it. And as she herself took the trouble to make it, could it be but comfortable

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portable to her lover! A sudden trembling seized me all over, and my dear Angelia seemed to suffer more than I did myself. The grief which sat visible upon her lovely countenance greatly afflicted me, but as it was a proof of her love, I found a sort of pleasure even in my affliction. I fainted away, and when I came to myself again, I found my face covered with water, which was nothing else but the tender tears that had flowed from her lovely eyes, while she was kindly employed in giving me all the assistance she could think of, with regard to any thing in my cloathing that she thought might, by being loosened, contribute to dissipate my fit. The fright into which my melancholy condition threw her, conveyed the trembling, which had now left me, to her delicate body. Not having strength to give me a cordial, which stood in a glass on the chimney, she pointed to it with her hand, and with a faltering tongue desired me to take it, which I did, and found myself much revived by it. What joy to Angelia! but alas, I only recovered sight and sense to be plunged into an abyss of grief! This same Angelia, who had with such resolution assisted me, after relating what she had suffered while absent, and to what a deplorable condition she was reduced while I seemed to be
without

without life in her arms, fell back of a sudden into an elbow-chair deprived of all knowledge, and, to appearance, of life itself. What a dreadful thunderbolt this to me! alas! I knew not what to do. Suppose I could have thought of some means of bringing her to her senses again, I had scarce strength to go about it. Nevertheless a sort of grief, which borders upon despair, fortified me. Instead of throwing water upon her face, my eyes poured out a flood of tears, which brought her again to life; and thus did we reciprocally save one another by the grief which the dread of our dying had brought upon us. I had opened Angelia's robe with an intention to cut the lace of her stays, not considering that she had nothing but her night-gown on, with which she had got out of bed after her mother and maid were gone. Till such time as she was quite recovered, and that I had the pleasure of seeing that mortal paleness, which had overspread her lovely countenance, give way to more lively colours; I say, it was not till then I perceived that her beautiful neck and bosom were exposed to view. Contented love is frolicksome, but drooping love feeds on grief. I took the advantage of this disorder by covering that beautiful spot with my glowing face, and imprinting thousands
of

of kisses on that tempting bosom, now wholly in my view and possession, and which I never before had seen, but by sudden and transitory glances. Angelia had no power to resist. Love disarmed her, and made it impossible for her not to participate in my happiness.

However, as Pleasure fatigues, particularly those who are not in their usual vigour, which was my case, I could not long support the violence of my transports; for which reason I made a truce with them for a while, and enjoyed, during a short interval of rest, the pleasure of reading in Angelia's eyes her love, and my happiness.

She took the benefit of this short cessation of amorous hostilities to pin her gown, and by that means to deprive me of the sight of what I now looked upon as my property for ever. She proposed my taking some nourishment, which I really wanted; but as I did not imagine that she had any thing to give me of eatables, I told her that my stomach was not craving, in the apprehension I was under to give her uneasiness upon account of her not having wherewith to appease my hunger. She employed the most tender and pressing solicitations, and when she had obtained my consent, opened a cup-board at the side of her chimney, took out a pot with jelly, and fed me herself with a tea-spoon.

Some

Some cracklins were the only bread she had. She joined to this a second glass of excellent ratafia, and this little repast, more delicate than solid, fortified me so surprisingly, that I soon found myself as fresh and well as when I first got under the bed. Angelia, seeing me out of danger, resumed her natural gaiety. We gave ourselves up to the pleasure of forgetting our disasters, and the little malicious Cupid was so kind, at this time, as to soften the remembrance of the torments he had made us endure. I might be said, in effect, to enjoy my dear Angelia, since I took many liberties with her, which she suffered in a manner to make me believe that she would permit whatever I attempted.

Love is never really satisfied. One favour makes us desire a second, and even the last still excites new desires. A lover in the height of pleasure, is impatient to renew it, and his happiness takes flight the moment it is interrupted.

I kissed Angelia numberless times, which her complaisance made her receive, and her love return.

The kiss, that favour of small consequence, seems be the least on the list of Pleasures, because it is commonly the first. But according to my way of reasoning, it is the greatest of all. In a moment it is enjoyed,
and

and renewable at pleasure; and if it be the pledge of friendship, it is the triumph of love. It enflames two lovers with that voluptuous fire which encreases by degrees to keep pace with their pleasures. A most complete enchantment, seizes on all the parts of their bodies. Their souls seem to fix upon their lips, where they swim in a torrent of delights, which they communicate to one another, and in the transports which agitate and confound them, they make but one soul animating two bodies, united by the most ravishing intimacy.

Angelia and I were deeply plunged in this sweet intoxicating gulph, and we abandoned ourselves in it with so much passion, that, for some time, I had no view to a more complete possession. But the charm ceased; I made bold pushes, and was vigorously repulsed. Several attacks fatigued me, without being able to obtain the least advantage. In fine, Angelia, faint and tired with resistance, held out her hand to me, saying: Stop, Verforand. I only ask you one moment, be patient and hear me. I love you, continued she, and feel that I shall do so to the last moment of my life. Deserve an attachment so sincere. I don't desire you to respect me, but exempt me from the displeasure which but too often follows the
victory

victory that you are striving to gain over me. I shall make no farther resistance ; but be generously yourself my defender against yourself. Consider that you can still love me, but that you cannot wed me, because our conditions are an invincible obstacle to our marriage. Believe, however, that I will do all that is in my power to surmount it, if you spare me this day ; and that, if you take the advantage of my weakness, you shall never see me more. Let us love one another, and taste the pleasures that don't expose us to repentance.

In so saying, she flew into my arms, Reason was silent, and Love only spoke. A thousand kisses soon smothered all the doubts and fears which her threatening discourse had raised in my breast, and she gave herself up to me with so much love, that I thought Modesty in its last agonies had dictated this speech, to which the most passionate and tender transports gave flatly the lye. The hopes of finding me obedient to the law which she prescribed, was the height of her wishes, and I had the ravishing spectacle before my eyes of the same person fainting away in my arms with Pleasure, who had some time before been in the same condition with Grief. I could not withstand the temptation, I laid my dear Angelia gently upon
her

her bed, and I punished her voluptuously for having confined me prisoner so long under it.

The grief which her first fainting fit gave me, had been the means of restoring her to life; the pleasure I had to see the second, had operated the same cure, to which succeeded a new death; and in this state of ravishment, where nothing is felt from feeling too much, we passed several times from life to death, and from death to life again.

The clock struck twelve. Angelia told me it was time to be gone. I begged hard to pass the day under the bed, in hopes that the following night would overpay my constraint during the day; but to no purpose. She begged I would not expose her to see me once more in the state to which I had been reduced. In short, we burnt the robe which I had on when I came; and she gave me another, that I might not be known again.

I went out: and this done we parted.

I wrote to her next day, but she sent no answer to my letter, nor to several others which I sent her from time to time.

About a month after I received the following billet.

I love you still as much as I did. I have, unfortunately for me, no reason to hate you. I go to-morrow to a Convent, from whence I never more will stir. I had promised to be devoted

devoted to you ; I now break my engagement. Remember that you made a bad use of the only moment in which I wanted to put you to the trial. Adieu for ever.

She kept but too exactly her word. The news which she communicated, concerned me too nearly, not to be particularly enquired into. I answered the billet, asked pardon ; but in vain. She was determined, and the fatal resolution was executed.

When she talked to her parents of being a nun, their surprise was great, and their grief still greater. All the family took part in an event so singular. Commands, intreaties, promises, threatenings, nothing could prevail with Mademoiselle Doran.

She entered into the Convent of **** at Paris, where she is to remain while she lives.

Without resource in circumstances so dreadful, I did what few young people would have done in my place, I mean, to consult with my Father, to whom I related, with all possible exactness, what had passed betwixt Mademoiselle Doran and me ; which I did in so passionate a manner, that I had no occasion to tell him my Mistress's retreat made me quite desperate. He sympathised with me in my grief, and promised his endeavours to calm it. Could I address myself better in an affair which so nearly touched
my

my heart, than to a man who owed his fortune to Love ?

My Father would have been better pleased that Mademoiselle Doran had been a private man's daughter, even without fortune, than a man of quality's. He considered that it would be great imprudence in him to speak to Monsieur Doran, and therefore addressed himself to one of the Fathers of the Oratory, a man of sense and a great Jansenist, and, in this quality, Director, or rather Governor of Madam Doran. Fifty louis for the poor, slipped into this good Ecclesiastic's hand, who undertook the distribution, secured him in the interest of my Father, who, without making himself known, told him all that was necessary; adding, that he believed, if Mademoiselle Doran's parents would consent to her marriage with me; she could be prevailed with to abandon her design of being a Nun; and that the father of the young man was very rich, and willing to procure for his son an honourable post, and give him a good fortune. The good Father was sensible of the advantage of this affair to Monsieur Doran's family, and promised to propose it, which he accordingly did, and succeeded. About eight days after this first interview, my Father went to see him, as had been agreed upon, and he told him that after
mature

mature deliberation Monsieur and Madame Doran had consented to give their daughter to the young man of whom he had spoke to him, and that nothing remained but to make him known.

What joy to a tender and compassionate Father! he could not bear it without discovering himself. He immediately proposed that the Director should go a little way with him, and getting him into his coach, which waited at the end of the street, he brought him to dinner at his house.

I knew not one syllable of all this negotiation; however, when I was informed that my Father desired to speak with me, I guessed it was upon my dear Angelia's account I was sent for; but I durst not hope that it would turn out to my advantage.

In the afternoon the reverend Father presented me to Monsieur Doran. I threw myself at his feet, and he was so good as to raise me up, and both he and his Lady having tenderly embraced me, did me the honour, from that moment, of calling me their son, at the same time telling me that it gave them great pleasure to make me happy, since I was capable of putting an end to their affliction, by occasioning their daughter to leave her retreat. I wrote a particular

account to Angelia of every step that had been taken in this affair. Her father wrote to her at the same time, and Madam Doran took upon her to deliver both letters directly to her daughter, and to bring her along with her.

One must be father or lover to conceive all the joy of Monsieur Doran, my father, and me. We expected the return of Madam Doran, with that sweet impatience which is occasioned by the most perfect hope, unaccompanied by any perplexing doubt or fear. Orders were given to prepare Mademoiselle Doran's apartment. My Father and I were invited to sup with her. My Mother was sent for, and while supper was preparing, the articles of a marriage-contract were drawing up.

In about two hours, our joy was converted into the deepest melancholy. Madam Doran returned alone, first motive of grief, which soon gave place to a more just and higher degree of sorrow. Mademoiselle Doran insisted absolutely on being a Nun. And as to her marriage with me, she had told her mother, that, even in the case of her remaining in the world, she would never consent to it.

What

What blow to a lover! Monsieur and Madam Doran pitied my case extremely, and, in a manner, forgot their own grief to calm mine. However, a little time after, we parted for ever. Angelia was constant in her resolution, she took the habit in eight days, and at the expiration of two years pronounced the fatal *formula*, which excluded her for ever from the society of men. The remonstrances I sent her in writing, and those that were made by every one that I imagined could have any influence, were all in vain: It was not till after she had made her *profession*, that she consented to see me in the parloir. She received me politely. O how charming did she appear in her religious habit! I quite forgot her condition, and spoke of my passion without her being able to silence the rapturous flowings of my tongue. She loved me, and even now acknowledged it; but from that day would never see me more. I wrote to her, but all my letters were returned unopened.

Permit me to make a few reflexions on an adventure so singular. I was young as well as Mademoiselle Doran. Our attachment was reciprocal. We had been long debarred the pleasure of seeing one another, and the opportunity was the more precious

the more we had longed for it. As this was the case, how could it possibly be imagined that we would not take the advantage of the opportunity that love had favoured us with? What man would have believed that Angelia spoke sincerely, when she said that if I took advantage of her *foiblesse*, I should never see her more? What woman, after holding such a discourse with her lover, would expect or be glad of his implicitly obeying her commands? I had read romances, I knew how far a girl is eloquent in such cases, and that her principal aim is commonly to persuade the contrary of what she says.

My misfortune will be no lesson to others; for I scarce believe there can be an instance brought of an intrigue ending in this manner, and it is ten to one if future ages will produce such a scene; for which reason I put it down as a prodigy.

Two months, two tedious months passed, without my having, though daily in the way of the most attracting pleasures, one moment's satisfaction. I was depressed, I may say sunk in the deepest melancholy, and reflections on all that had happened were my constant occupation, sometimes blaming myself, and sometimes Mademoiselle Doran,

I frequented the play-houses, in hopes to dissipate my chagrin either with the performances of the stage, or the company that I met with; but all to no purpose. The fair sex, with all the ornaments of nature and dress, no longer attracted my looks, than just the time that was necessary to see that Mademoiselle Doran was not among them. The most esteemed pieces appeared to me wretchedly dull and tiresome. The machinery and scenes, so agreeable and interesting to youth, had no charms for me. In short, I scarce took notice of the coquetish airs and inviting looks of the Actresses, who reading my misfortune in my countenance, invited me with the most engaging and unreserved incitements to seek for relief to my disquieted mind.

A wou'd-be wit, known to half Paris, and despised by every one who knew him, took notice of me. He imagined I was a stranger who had occasion to be conducted, and ascribed to want of acquaintances what was only a distaste of the world, and the effect of discontent. He judged by my dress that I was a man of distinction. He asked my name and place of abode, and chance having directed him to one who probably knew me, he learned all that he

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wanted.

wanted. Any other would upon such an information, have subtracted from the good opinion he had conceived of me. But my spark, who loved useful friends better than distinguished ones, advanced in affection when he understood that I was very rich. He brushed up to me the next night at the opera. He made me a very stupid compliment, which I answered very briefly, he then began a conversation of which he was obliged to support the whole burden himself. I flattered myself to get rid of him by asking, very coldly, how and where we came to know one another? but that was just where he wanted me to come. He spoke of my Father, my Mother, of all my relations, and of a great part of my friends, in a manner, to make me believe that he passed the most of his time with them. I had always been on good terms with my family and relations, and I had never once seen Monsieur Duroman (the name of this adventurer) in any house of my acquaintance. He was at great pains to persuade me that the Green-room was the finest place in the world. There, said he, you are in the true nursery for news of every kind. The Courtiers give every day an account of what passes at Versailles, where the King was yesterday, and

and where he will go to-morrow. The Gentlemen of the Robe speak of dogs, horses, and music, and the Finàncers of gold. It is, continued he, a study not at all easy to *know one's Paris well*; we acquire it in these places almost imperceptibly. Only take notice, in it, of the Petit-maitres, hear them speak, you will know what they do, what they intend to do, and even what they never will do.

Next day, in the Green-room of the play-house, Monsieur Duroman repeated all he had said the day before with an audible voice, so that the persons who were near us were at liberty to make their advantage of it if they thought proper. I blushed at his impudence and left him abruptly; but one cannot avoid one's fate: it was decreed I should read his works, and be more tired with them than I had been shocked with his making so free with me at first.

Two days after I was astonished to see him enter my apartment. He presented me with a parcel of books, and advised me, with a surprising assurance, to purchase them; assuring me that they were works of his own production, as diverting as useful. He spoke in so decisive a tone that I durst not contradict him. I gave him him a louis for his per-

formances, and in a week after made a present of them to my laquais, who had trouble enough to get a crown for them, so ready are the Parisians to blow on goods offered to sale by certain persons. When Monsieur Duroman had my louis in his pocket, joy sparkled in his eyes. I imagined that he wanted money, and that having now obtain'd his end, he would quickly leave me : but I was mistaken ; he intended to bestow a little more of his insufferable gaiety upon me. He began by telling me all sort of news, spoke of many persons whom he supposed to be his friends, and with an air so natural and confident, that I swallowed the bait, and was even foolish enough to applaud myself for having got acquainted with a man so universally known in the world. The first day he read above half of one of his performances, and continued to come and see me assiduously till he had made me admire all his productions.

We were in the last volume when one day the Chevalier de L****, one of my good friends came in. Duroman saluted him, and then walked off. When he was gone, the Chevalier told me that this Monsieur Duroman was a very dangerous man ; a good gentleman, but justly despised by the world ;
that

that literature was his resource, and, thanks to the blindness of the age, profitable enough to him; that if I encouraged him, I might expect to see him every day; that he would dine with me regularly twice a week, and by degrees would not only dispose of me, but likewise of my servants, my money, and my coach as freely as I could myself. The Chevalier having the character of giving always into extremes, I concluded that he had overcharged the picture he had drawn of Duroman, and therefore I resolved to examine him carefully. The first thing I wanted to verify was what he told me about the Green-room, but he happened to be at the play-house where I was that evening; I directly disappeared, and went to another theatre, very well assured not to find him there.

I heard all, said nothing, and I never was better amused. A man of a good behaviour, as sedate as Duroman was petulant, saluted me because he saw me often at this theatre. I approached him, and we made our joint observations, with this advantage on his side, that he knew every body, and by that means his assistance was of great service in what I wanted to be informed of.

The greatest part of the Actresses were then ranged in order in the Green-room, and formed a very agreeable sort of parade.

Monsieur Sophin (the name of my new friend) made me acquainted with them all in a very little time, by relating the most interesting passages of their lives, which I shall not repeat here, having no design to rob the Annals of the theatre, nor to make them.

The play began. Sophin and I took our places, and referred the sequel of our observations to another opportunity. We were upon the stage surrounded with the most brilliant youth of Paris, but I soon perceived that I was got in the middle of four as great blockheads, as could be found in the whole kingdom, all persons of quality and figure.

I learned that the young Marquis de **** had lately bought a fine set of horses, which cost near five thousand livres. Dost thou believe, said a young Duke, that he paid the money? Without doubt, replied the author of the news. Thou'rt deceived, said the Duke, the Marquis is not rich, and I know a lady who makes him this present. Every one appeared to be astonished at the good fortune of the Marquis, and curious to know the lady. Several were named, but they all had their lovers. Is it possible, cried the Duke with a sort of a sneer, that I must unfold this mystery? Puzzle not your brains longer about it, 'tis my wife who is the Mar-

Marquis's benefactrix. But, by way of compensation, his spouse has ordered Martin to make me a berlin of two thousand crowns, so I'm no loser.

In those days I had some thought. Nothing could surprise me more than to hear the Duke complimented upon his so frankly divulging his baseness; but I was soon cured of this delicacy. Experience taught me that to live in the world we must not stand upon punctilios of decorum, and that things which would pass for crimes among Cits the least scrupulous, are nothing, in high life, but merry sallies flowing from a liberal and polite education; all depends upon what is called the easy manner, and a man never does amiss while he is on a fashionable footing.

I learned that a Knight of Malta very amiable, and who was pointed to on the opposite side of the stage, was going to throw off the cross, in order to marry Madam de L****, a rich Financer's young widow. It was asked, how the Countess D*** would behave? Just as she thinks proper, said one of the company: the Chevalier loved her, she ruined herself upon his account, must he first wed and then die for hunger with her? he ought to be crowned for a fool. He finds a woman with three thousand livres yearly rent, he has himself ten, and consequently

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must conclude this marriage; and as for the Countess, the best thing she can do is to commence charity-lady of her parish, and give to the poor what the Chevalier has left her. A great deal was said upon this subject, and these casuists having found that the Chevalier's conscience was by no means chargeable with the poor Countess's misfortunes, they unanimously applauded his conduct.

They were a little out of humour with young Durval's insensibility. He confessed to his friends that the noisy favours of women in high life displeased him; adding, that he had a plot upon the heart of a young Lady perfectly handsome, who lived very retired, and admitted only a small number of friends; that this peaceable commerce was very agreeable to his taste; that he hoped to succeed, though the lady had the reputation of a modesty that was proof against the most pressing solicitations. He even confessed that he already went without ceremony to her house. He was asked the name of this phenomenon; and he had no sooner told it, than one of his friends cried, Proceed no farther, the place is taken. Durval maintained the contrary with warmth, declared himself the Don Quixote of his Dame, and took occasion from this to blame the liberty with which they maliciously lashed all women.

But

But the most complete and humbling surprise put a stop to his moralising, when his friend produced the lady's picture, and a letter was read aloud, in which she gave him an invitation, by way of rendezvous, next day to dinner. Durval was piqued at the disappointment, but he made a virtue of necessity, and thought no more of the lady the moment after.

As idleness is dishonourable, he was advised to make another choice. He determined himself in favour of Madam ****, who was at the play. He left his place directly, and went to join her in her box, where, by all the little common-place symptoms of love, practised with great affectation, he endeavoured to let the lady know, as well as the public, what had been determined in his extravagant Council.

Another, who intended to quit the king's service, proposed the finding out some one or other who could accommodate himself with the Marchioness D***, whom he intended soon to drop, since he did not think of returning any more to Versailles. He had formerly been in love with this lady at Paris, and since he belonged to the regiment of French Guards, he had found her at Court, where he visited her exactly when he went to mount guard or to make his court, without giving

giving the least umbrage to a President's pretty lady whom he loved at Paris.

The Marchioness in question was tolerably handsome, for which reason it was determined she should be provided. In the very nick of time arrived the person who was to purchase the Lieutenancy, to which her good graces seemed to be attached. The affair was proposed to him, he promised to take her, and nothing more was said upon the subject.

The play ended, we returned to the Green-Room, of which the decorations were totally changed. The Actors and Actresses, whom we had at first seen, had given place to others who were to act in the Entertainment.

It is usually in this interval that parties for supper are made. The Petit-maitres, and those whom want of money obliges to put up with family suppers, never fail to give out that they are engaged at an opera-girl's, or at a woman's whom they keep. They invite those to accompany them whom they know to be otherwise engaged, with regard to those who have no party made, they promise to carry them along with them at any other time.

That day I was to sup at the Countess de Cornil's, a widow, to her sad regret advanced in years. She spent a great deal of money,

com-

committed great follies, and fancied, that, by affecting the petulancy of youth, she would retain the charms of it. She idolised a young Colonel, on whom she lavished her money, and required no other services at his hands than that he should be exact in coming every evening to sup at her house. This commerce lasted more than six months, and he punctually observed the conditions of the agreement. Nevertheless, whether from ostentation, or from fear of being thought to be attached to an old Coquette, he recounted to whoever would hear him, in a ludicrous manner, all the brilliant parties of which he made one every evening. This detail was so agreeable in his conceit, that he quite forgot that twenty persons, who knew what footing he was upon with his Countess, could have given him the lye, without his being able to make any reply.

I was charmed to learn, in this manner, the secret history of people of whom the French nation despises the collective body with the same ridicule that they are guilty of in being taken up with the particulars who compose it. I had no thought that the Little Piece was ended, and almost all the company gone. Monsieur Sophin went out with the Duke D*** at whose house he was to sup. His
departure

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departure made me think of going too. I found at the foot of the stairs a lovely young person, followed by a sort of cousin, who would absolutely take the first hackney that presented, to carry them home. The Mistress was for staying, at least till a coach came to the door to take them up; and they both disputed with the Exempt, who refused as yet to let any hack advance. This dispute amused me so long as was necessary to be fully informed of it, and I offered to be a mediator, but the Exempt would hear of no compromising. My coach came up, I offered it, they accepted, and I conducted these Ladies to their own habitation near the Palais-royal. I was desired to go in, which was just what I wanted. I was introduced into a very handsome apartment extremely well furnished, and every thing I saw spoke not only taste but opulence.

I imagined I was got into a kept lady's lodgings, and by all appearance I judged right. The splendor and magnificence that every where appeared, gave me ground to believe that the master must be some great Lord; but I was mistaken, for he was an old rake of a Financer, whose titles of nobility consisted in good contracts that brought him in yearly something more than eighty thousand livres.

He

He had given Madam Saufica (the name of my new acquaintance) to the value of twenty thousand crowns in furniture and plate. He paid her exactly a hundred pistoles a month, by way of pension, which was the fund appropriated for house-keeping. More wore-out than old, this Gallant had no occasion for a Mistress but to keep up the custom of having one. Sometimes he entertained his friends at her lodgings, and sometimes made her come to his house.

She was excessively foolish; as impudent as a woman of gallantry can well be, and covetous of gaining money at any rate, to spend it again lavishly; but she was young and pretty, and sometimes thought of other pleasures than that of throwing away money by an extravagant expence.

The folly of Courtiers and of Citizens was an inexhaustible fund for her, which she took the advantage of with less prudence than impudence.

The Man of quality, the Soldier, the Robe-man, and the Financer supped together at her house, and every one of them had his day, which continued till next morning, when he was to give way to a successor. The extravagancies of their common Mistress amused them so well, that they had not time to make any remarks upon one another. I

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was

was at several of those suppers, and on my retiring I deplored the blindness of so many worthy people, who were the only persons in all Paris who did not see that they were dupes, and of whom every one paid very dear for the title of best friend of a little creature, who had only two, Money and Pleasure.

I imagined that a woman of this character would perfectly fit me, that there was nothing more necessary than to chuse her with so much care that her charms might be agreeable to my taste of peaceful pleasure, in which alone I delighted.

After having remained long undetermined, I threw my eyes on Mademoiselle Clelia, who passed, at that time, for one of the prettiest girls in Paris. An agreeable plumpness, particularly to me who was always fond of it, did not hinder her shape from being very genteel. An extraordinary agility made her lively and brisk, so that she had all the charms of plumpness without the defects, that is to say, she was fair as alabaster, with a bosom that could never be enough viewed and admired.

The question was to carry her off from a man who was her keeper, and whom she allowed to assume that title upon account of the services he had formerly and did daily render her. This is the name which a
little

little Mistress commonly gives to the ruinous means that her lover employs to make her fortune.

I was son to a powerful and opulent Financier, who gave me plenty of money. I thought I might venture to make a declaration of love. It was received with a disdainful look, which was followed by a contemptuous sneer. I renewed the attack some days after, upon which a very serious air was assumed to tell me, that if some theatrical females made merchandise of their charms, it did not follow from thence that all of them were of that disposition. This was pronounced with an assurance that made me repent of my boldness. I said not a word more, and must confess that I was silly enough to make excuses.

I happened to meet by accident with my friend Monsieur Sophin, and made him acquainted with my passion for Clelia. He made a jest of it; and could not forbear laughing, when I told him with an air of surprise that I could not conceive why she acted the vestal with me. By a quarter of an hour's conversation with my friend, I was converted. At Paris the Ladies of gallantry speak of Virtue, as Cowards of Courage, and all for form's sake.

I sent

I sent for Monsieur Duroman, who made no scruple, in order to secure the friendship of people in high life, to be the intendant of their pleasures. He gave me, not without value directly paid, so good instructions with respect to Clelia, that I resolved not to put her upon the footing of a regular Mistress, as she had neither wit nor any of the accomplishments that make society agreeable.

As the wisest reflexions cannot often get the better of the most ridiculous projects, I could not conquer the tender impression which Clelia had made in my heart, and rather than be exposed to new refusals on her part, in renewing the tale of my love, I took a different road, and, instead of a wounded heart, boldly talked of a golden key to open hers. My proposal was plain, but rich: in one word, I offered a hundred louis if Clelia would let me . . . sup with her. She feigned to elude my proposal, and at length remitted me to the following day for her answer; but I pressed hard for a conclusion of the bargain, and she agreed that we should sign, seal and deliver that very evening.

About an hour after, one of my best friends came and told me, in a few words, that he had lost all his money, and a hundred pieces upon

upon his word; that he had to do with strangers, with whom he was but slenderly acquainted; and therefore begged I would lend him that sum. I directly put the roll of gold destined for Clelia into his hand, and he left me. I was tempted to follow him to avoid a disagreeable scene that might happen at Clelia's, if I could not produce the gold according to promise. But the idea of the pleasure I expected got the better of my scruples, and I resolved to give her fair promises till I could give her the value of her favours in a better coin.

The play ended, the Belle went to undress, and did not fail to come and take me along with her to her house, where we played a party of piquet till supper was ready. She gained two louis of me, which I paid directly, and had no more remaining but one, and some silver crowns: she knew nothing of my poverty. We supped well and cheerfully, and our conversation was more loose than spiritual. In fine, under pretence that I was accustomed to sit up late, it was proposed to play again after supper. Clelia went to bed; when her waiting-maid was retired, the mother conducted me to her daughter's chamber, where she left me in less than half an hour. The moment she was gone the
cards

cards dropt out of our hands, we changed this play, which was but amusing, into another more lively and interesting. We recommenced several parties, which brought us to the hour of six in the morning. Clelia observing that it was broad day-light, begged I would retire, and made me promise to return. When I was ready to go out, I acquainted her, without ceremony, that I had not about me the hundred louis which I had promised her: she changed colour. I told her I would not fail to send them at the hour of her levee. Whatever she thought of my procedure, she said nothing, and we parted, in appearance, tolerable good friends.

As soon as I got home I put a hundred pieces in a purse, which I gave to a sensible fellow of a footman, ordering him to carry them to Clelia betwixt eleven and twelve.

The droll had belonged to a young nobleman who had initiated him in his most secret parties, and to whom he had rendered great services upon such occasions. He was tall, well-made, of a tolerable handsome figure, and shaped to wear a coat embroidered with gold, as well as one laced with silk. One of his friends, footman to an Actor, procured him entrance into the *paradis* every time I went to the play, where Madam Clelia's charms

charms had touched his heart, as well as his master's; so that he was pleased and embarrassed at the same time with this commission. He went to consult with his friend about it. The other, who knew how matters went in Clelia's house, advised him to make her give him the same value for the hundred louis which she had given his master, and in this manner did he execute his project:

He went to Frippery-hall, where he hired a handsome embroidered suit, and all the equipage of a man of quality. From thence he drove to Clelia's in a hackney coach unattended, and arrived there about half an hour past ten. He desired to speak to her, in broken French, and was told that she was asleep: but he insisted; upon which the mother appeared, and not judging proper to send away a man of so brilliant a figure, introduced him into her daughter's bed-room, who awaked as they entered.

The gallant acted a German Baron newly arrived at Paris. He made great professions of love, in an almost unintelligible jargon, half French, half Dutch; and the mother, observing how things were like to go, disappeared. When he found himself without witnesses, he swore that he was desperately
in

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in love with her, and with the same breath poured out upon her bed, my hundred louis. So rich a frolic could not be taken amiss, nevertheless Madam seemed to be out of humour: our Baron made excuses, and was going to take up his gold. He was taken at his word, upon which he threw the coverings to the feet of the bed, under pretence of seeking his louis wherever they might be; but he was too much in love to lose so favourable an opportunity. Clelia stood on the defensive for a while, but in her present situation it was not to be supposed she could long stand her ground against the vigorous attacks of a brisk young fellow, and a hundred good pieces; she soon yielded. At half an hour after twelve our Baron pretended business, and retired very well pleased with his adventure. He went to deliver back his dress and quality to the broker, and then came home.

I asked for him at two o'clock when I awaked, and by the account he gave he seemed to have done his commission very exactly. I dined that day at my Father's, and as dinner was ended, Clelia's laquais came and delivered me the following billet.

*When one drains his purse to enable others
to perform their promises, he ought to be
punctual*

punctual to his own. I thought I might have depended upon your word. Let me know why I have not heard from you this morning.

CLELIA.

It is scarce possible to be more surprised than I was upon reading this billet. I wrote directly to her that I should certainly call upon her before the evening. I provided myself with another purse of a hundred louis, and went to her house in less than two hours after. I told her that her letter had astonished me; that I never broke my word; and that I had sent her the sum by my servant, who said he had delivered it. She insisted that she had seen no messenger from me, and her mother confirmed the same; which made us conclude that my footman was a rogue. I begged they would allow me to examine him in their presence; they consented, and he was called up. He seemed to be a little confounded upon his first appearing, which confirmed my suspicions. I asked him to whom he had given the purse with which I had trusted him that morning? To Mademoiselle, answered he resolutely, looking in her face. She was a little disconcerted, rose from her chair directly, and led me into another room, shutting the door; there, clasping me in her arms, she told me, with the most tender and moving air, that she

hoped I would pardon her for the stratagem she had contrived, to have the pleasure of seeing me again. It is true I received the purse, and here it is, shewing me it. I punished Clelia in the most voluptuous manner I could for the trick she had played me, which I could not pardon otherwise. The embarrass which she was at first in upon my servant's appearing, had made me uneasy, but she had dissipated all my doubts, and nothing remained but the flattering idea of being loved by the charming Clelia. When I came out, my laquais asked me if I thought him guilty; I told him no, and gave him a six-livre piece to drink, so we were both content.

In the evening I met with Monsieur Sophin, as the Opera ended, and I was quite impatient till he knew my adventure. I proposed our taking a turn in the garden of the Palais-royal; he agreed, and I there told him all that had passed. The story made him laugh, and particularly when I assured him that Clelia was in love with me. How long is it, said he with a grave air, since you left her house? About an hour, answered I. I pardon you then, continued he, all these follies: in a week's time I shall expect to hear of other matters from you. I confess that by what my friend said I looked upon
him

him as a man deprived of his senses, and was very much concerned for him. I did not imagine that there could be any upon the face of the earth who would not be as much persuaded of my happiness as I was myself. In order to convince him, I employed the most specious reasons, and descended to the most minute circumstances. He heard me patiently but still believed me less. In fine, he confessed that he found in all that I had told him a very blind sort of a story, and that I would do well to sift my laquais, which I agreed to, more out of complaisance than curiosity. We went home to my house, where according to agreement with my friend, I called my servant, and told him, with an air of indignation, that I knew all that he had done that morning, and that nothing but the confession of his fault could induce me to forget it. He seemed to be under great confusion, and knowing that I was not to be trifled with, gave us an exact account of what had passed at Clelia's, and concluded with asking me pardon, which I granted, but discharged him.

It was no small mortification to me to find that Clelia could no longer retain the place she had in my opinion; but I hearkened to the voice of Reason, and was persuaded, as Monsieur Sophin said, that gold

never was capable of begetting love in either sex.

This scene gave me a disgust to transitory adventures, and I resolved, cost what it would, to have a permanent attachment. The only difficulty was the choice of the object. I saw in several houses which I frequented very amiable young ladies, and who deserved my homage; but the remembrance of the disaster which separated me from Mademoiselle Doran tied up my tongue every time that I intended to make an offer of my heart, and I was foolish enough to be afraid of our intrigue ending in the same manner. With girls of gallantry I did not run any such risk, but I dreaded the consequences that result from a commerce with them. Thus the idea of Mademoiselle Doran, and that of Clelia being the object of my reflexions, alternately hindered me from coming to a resolution.

I was one evening with Duroman in the amphitheatre of the Opera. He was well versed in the secret history of that Court, and our conversation ran upon the intrigues of the Actresses. It may be easily believed that it was long and very entertaining. He made me take notice on the Queen's side of Mademoiselle ****, whom I shall call Hortensia, that I may not incur the displeasure

sure of a body so respectful as that of the Chorus-nymphs. He asked my opinion of her. I answered coldly, that she appeared to be tolerably handsome. Duroman knew that one participate always of the glory or dishonour of the society, to which one belongs, and he was sensible that what he had recited before would not dispose me in favour of this Belle: he told me that I must not confound her with the others, from whom she greatly differed; that she was a girl of a good family, who joined Modesty to her other accomplishments, and whom mere necessity had forced to put up with a profession unworthy of her birth and sentiments. I asked him if he knew her. He told me, without thinking I suppose, that he did not; and it was perhaps the only time in his life he had made such a confession. His sincerity affected me, and made me desirous of a nearer view of this Opera Phoenix. But Duroman perceived in a box the Countess de ****, a woman of the first quality. He had the honour of adding to the number of bad authors whom she protected; he left me to go and pay his court to her.

I saw the Abbé Lenoir, a bright wit in his own conceit, and who, like many others, had more good luck than science.

I listened for some time to his jumbled discourse about the Opera, and I could perceive a great many sots who took him to be a man of consequence, because, with his cane, he beat the measure. When he had fully decided, without knowing wherefore, and with that sufficiency which the ecclesiastic habit gives always to those who are unworthy of it, I attacked him, and proved, in few words, that he was as bad a critic as he thought himself a good author. My reasoning was just, for it made him silent. A moment after, he spoke to me of several Actors, and as he was apprehensive of being refuted, he engaged me to give my opinion before he risked his. What man is proof against complaisance? That of this Abbé flattered me so far that I forgot he was much despised, and still less than he was despicable; that it was not many years since he came to Paris in wooden shoes, without merit, and, which is worse, without money; that having no knowledge of the world, he had turned his thoughts to the religious state, hoping to conceal himself more easily; that the habit under which he had flattered himself to remain unknown, had on the contrary served to make him remarkable; that at first he was a most humble dependant, afterwards friend, in fine, comrade and adviser of some young
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men of quality; that they had raised his fortune in acknowledgment of the services he had rendered them in their pleasures, and that, in short, finding more resources in the world which he dreaded, than in the rubbish of a school, where he at first intended to bury himself, he had assumed the title of a man of letters, a title formerly in high esteem, but now so common, and so despicable, that it is indifferently ascribed to the man of learning and to the smatterer.

I found that he joined a sweetness of temper to a good deal of politeness. I was taken with his conversation; he perceived it, and made incredible efforts to tell me pretty things, and he succeeded, because I was prepossessed in his favour.

Mademoiselle Hortensia appeared again, I spoke to her. He knew her, and commended her highly. She shared with a mother and sister a third floor in a little street called *Rue du jour*, near St. Eustache. She had been in the Opera about six months, and her sister was making interest to be admitted. These two girls had received from Nature graces and talents which seemed to prognosticate great adventures. Without being ignorant of the value of these advantages, they had judgment enough to consider that merit makes but a slow progress without protection,

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which had determined them to come under that of our Abbé, who, for a certain valuable consideration, took upon him to put their charms in a proper light, and to raise them to their just value in the opinion of the world.

I was not informed of this scheme till long after it was settled. The Abbé told me only, that he had got Hortensia into the Opera, and that she deserved the protection of those who could serve her. He related, in a moving and ample manner, the misfortunes that had reduced the family of this young woman. I did not conceal the part I took in her unhappy fate, nor my readiness to oblige a girl so lovely, and so worthy of esteem: he began new encomiums, and I new offers of service. In fine, we parted, promising to meet again.

A few days after he did me the favour, one morning, of a visit. I asked him news of the lovely Hortensia, he told me that he had informed her of our conversation, that she was much obliged to me for the concern I expressed with regard to her unhappy fate, and that she had begged of him to come and return me thanks in her name, not daring to come herself. I told him that she was much to blame; he understood me, and next day at eleven whom should I see popping
in

in upon me, but Hortensia and her sister, conducted by the Abbé. They presented themselves with an alluring modesty. The first compliments were formal and serious, but the conversation, by degrees, enlivened, and became more entertaining, and it was pushed so far as was necessary to give me authority to propose a dinner without ceremony, which was accepted in the same manner as offered.

We diverted ourselves mighty well: good humour, and soft smiles were visible in every face. As it was extremely hot, I proposed that the ladies should put off their mantelets; but they excused themselves; however, at the desert they threw them by without being desired: two glasses of Champaign made them forget a counterfeited air of Modesty, which was more troublesome to themselves than to me. Hortensia then offered to my sight beauties that charmed me. She perceived it, first blushed, then laughed. In fine, night approached, and away they went. I had only time to whisper Hortensia in the ear, that I would gladly have the pleasure of seeing her alone; she appointed the Tuesday following, and was punctual.

For this time we dined *tête à tête*, and it is easy to guess what was the subject of our conversation. I spoke of Love, and she of

her Misfortunes. She was quite disgusted with the Opera, and yet obliged to continue in it, having no other resource. Besides, her mother was a woman intractable, and, like other mothers (who often think it an indispensable duty to contradict and tyrannise over their children in order to preserve, as they are pleased to think, their reputation) would hear of no other way of life for getting bread, than what suited her own humour best, and though Hortensia had again and again represented the danger of belonging to the Opera, yet by no means would she hear of her leaving it, upon the whimsical maxim of Virtue's having no merit where it is not put to a trial and triumphs. I believed all this; how could I doubt it, when I loved the person who spoke it?

Hortensia repeated twenty times the same thing in as many different manners. At length I proposed to her, without ceremony, to quit her mother, and take a little apartment, which I would furnish for her, and where I would take care that she should find all sort of necessaries. The condescending fair, not willing to trouble herself with refusing, nor me with pressing, accepted my offers; and as the sensation of gratitude is lively and quick in great and generous souls, my proposal was paid with a de-

declaration of love. I seemed to doubt of what was said, but I received half-proofs, and promises to complete them in the new apartment, where I was bespoke to sup the first night she went into it. The hour of the Opera approached, and I conducted Hortensia, who was not a little proud of arriving there in a gentleman's coach. From thence I went to hire an apartment in the street called St. Thomas du Louvre. I agreed with an upholsterer to furnish it, and all was ready on the third day. I had Hortensia conducted to her new habitation, and I did not arrive till two hours after, being willing that she should have time to examine particularly the whole extent of my generosity, and from thence be prompted to give me proofs of her gratitude.

The End of the First PART.

P A R T II.

AFTER the encomiums of two such illustrious personages as Monsieur Duroman and Monsieur l'Abbé Lenoir, I ought not to have been in any doubt about the character of this theatrical goddess. But I was in love, and it is well known that where the case is so, the more we desire to be happy, the higher our fears rise of being disappointed.

I went early to Hortensia's. She received me in her new habitation as people are wont to receive an intimate friend, when they know how to do the honours that civility requires. After reiterated thanks for all my favours, began a conversation upon the Lady's illustrious ancestors. The pleasure of seeing her, made me bear the fatigue that always attends genealogical details, but at the same time augmented the impatience I was under to reap the fruits of my cares. I introduced the subject of my love, upon which a lively representation was made of a great confidence in my probity, which alone occasioned the acceptance of my proposals, persuaded that I would not make a bad use of the right to which my generous liberalities might with justice

justice lay claim. All this was said with that dignity with which the stage inspires its Princesses. I was silly enough to be affected with it, and without replying very respectfully kissed Hortensia's hand. Supper was served, not sumptuous, but delicate. I had ordered but a few dishes filled with good things, and as I paid ready money I was well served. Hortensia did the honours, as mistress of the feast, in a manner, that made me judge she had no regret for leaving her mother's house. When supper was ended, and every thing removed, we were left alone, and both of us found ourselves in higher spirits, and more merrily disposed than when we sat down to table.

My Belle's whole domestics consisted of one woman, who acted in the capacity of chamber-maid and cook by turns; she was recommended by my laquais as his cousin. But as she was pretty, there was room to believe that they were not so near relations as to be weary of one another's company, and therefore I had the less dread of being interrupted.

My love took up my whole thoughts, and my tongue could utter nothing else. Hortensia artfully endeavoured to avoid answering me; but I took her silence for a constant acknowledgment of a sincere return, which she

she thought due to my affection; and I acted consequentially. I could read in her bright eyes that she was charmed with her situation, and that she loved me; that she dreaded the violence of my passion, but still more of her being forced, by its enchanting power, to make me happy. I observed her lovely bosom swell in proportion to my enterprising boldness. Every kiss I stole, gave it a degree more of agitation. I was myself transported with love, pleasure, and hopes. In this state, where the happy would ever remain, it was not in my power to restrain the impetuosity of my desires. I took Hortensia in my arms, expressing all the soft and amorous things that high-swelled passion can suggest, and in a moment after we both did separately what we ardently desired to do in conjunction, and she swooned away. I took advantage of that moment for obtaining what she till then refused me, and when she came to herself again, I was ready to throw her into a fainting fit more perfect and more delicious than the first. But she was well versed in the usual methods; how could she be ignorant of them, since she belonged to the Opera. It was necessary that every thing should be done in strict conformity to the laws of the ceremonial. With this view my fair One
told

told me a thousand times that I was very cruel, that I took advantage of her weakness, that I did not love her, since I had no regard to what was dearer to her than life. I had no time then to make any reply, and I gave her demonstrative proof that I could act, though I had neither power nor inclination to speak. She made some efforts to get out of my hands: vain attempt, of which the success would have heartily vexed her. In fine, she acted all the parts of despair which instantaneous ruin prescribed, and then most graciously abandoned her lovely person to my discretion, appearing to be plunged into that dejection, that sort of non-entity which an extraordinary and insupportable fatigue occasions. If her strength was spent, mine was still in its full vigour, and I made preparation to let her participate of it. This attention on my part gave her new spirits; she sighed, groaned, and even cried out, not so much from pain, as with a desire to make me believe she had suffered me to pull a flower untouched till then by any of our sex.

Pleasure charms at first, then ravishes, transports, and at last renders us even furious; which was my case upon this occasion. I gave myself wholly up to my happiness, and had

had no thoughts of its extasy. Hortensia, after fully satisfying what she owed to her expiring virtue, gave loose reins to her endeavours of augmenting my raptures by the most voluptuous incitements, of which the Opera is the best school, as they are the daily exercise of that tender female regiment.

So soon as my love gave her some moments of respite, Hortensia began to shed tears. Her grief surprised me at first, and afterwards affected me; in short, I participated in it without knowing the motive of it, but I did not long remain in ignorance. Presence of mind in the most critical circumstances is the highest accomplishment, and she was mistress of this rare talent. She had not forgot that it was highly important for her to persuade me that my late triumph was her first defeat, and it was for this reason that she gave tears to the remembrance, though remote, of her lost innocence. The stratagem succeeded; I was credulous, and my gratitude was proportioned to the idea I had of her favours. The next day I made her a present of a pair of ear-rings worth a thousand crowns, in a gold box of thirty louis value. This present restored her to her former gaiety, and it was but too evident, from her situation, that he who had originally acted

acted the same scene with her, had not been so generous: perhaps he was wiser and less amorous.

From that day we lived together in a perfect good correspondence. My passion augmented, and my money visibly diminished. In fine, though my Father gave me much more perhaps than he ought to have done, I soon found my purse empty, and never had seen so disagreeable a sight before.

The complaisant husband of a wife in Paris, who, in pursuit of public and private amusements, takes the speediest way of bringing about her ruin, is put to less expences for her, than the fond lover of an opera-girl who is in his first adventure. I had pretended so great losses to my Father by gaming, which he had always generously repaired, that I durst no more touch upon that string. All my friends advised me to have recourse to expedients, but not one of them offered me any supply.

There is in Paris a sort of people who are rich, live miserably, and in obscurity; who may be compared to those masters of inns who chuse to sleep in the stable, when they can lett their beds at a dear rate. These muck-worms have no desire to make use of their money for themselves, and are only taken up with the care of lending it to such as may have occasion to borrow from them.

I saw

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I saw several of those obliging and useful persons. Son to a man extremely rich, and, in a manner, of the same profession, I had reason to hope that I should find a resource among them. Not at all. I was left for a month exposed to the grief of being destitute of money; the more insupportable to me, as I was unacquainted with it. In fine, one of them, who had done business with my father, gave me at first some distant hopes, and thereafter consented (not till I had been conducted, by degrees, to the most urgent and humbling supplications) to lend me ten thousand livres for two years, upon condition, that in my note should be included the interests of the sum, at the rate of 166l. 13s. 6d. monthly, which made two thousand livres yearly; a moderate usury, to which the conscientious lender was willing to submit in my favour.

Such a dear-bought regard was terrifying. I applied elsewhere, and found worse. A great many proposals were made by several, who practised the trade of usury, the one more exorbitant than the other, and, in short, I was reduced to accept of the first offer, as the most favourable. I gave, accordingly, my note for fourteen thousand livres, and received almost ten. I say almost ten, and with truth, because I was obliged to give fifty crowns to five or six honest persons, who were

were present at the delivery of the money, and assured me they had taken a great deal of trouble to bring the affair to bear.

I loved Hortensia, she was my second self. I carried her directly four hundred louis, and desired she would keep them for me; and as I was obliged to go to the country next day; for a week, I thought the money safer in her custody, than in my own apartment at my Father's. The confidence reposed in my Belle, upon this occasion, gave her so much joy, that she could not conceal it. I was charmed with the opportunity of giving her this new proof of my love, and we gave ourselves up, she to the pleasure of renewing my happiness, and I to the raptures of enjoyment.

Next morning, the Duke of ***, whom I was to accompany to the country, came to take me up at Hortensia's, (for all Paris knew that I kept her.) We all three breakfasted together. She eat nothing, and I could observe, when the departing moment approached, that the tears stood in her eye. I was tempted not to go; but vanity at last got the better of love. I did not think it advisable to break with a man of quality, who honoured me with his friendship; so away I went without any formal adieu, as had been agreed betwixt her and me before.

Arrived

Arrived at the Duke's country seat, I found a very brilliant company assembled there. The Dutchess gave me particular marks of civility, which surprized me the more, as I was an entire stranger to her. I learned afterwards, that it was her way to despise her husband's friends at the same time that she gave them a gracious reception. This discovery mortified my self-love, but it taught me to put a just construction on the manner in which this Lady was pleased to cajole me.

I knew every individual of the company at supper, by the means of a Marchioness placed by me. It appeared, that since the moment she came into the world (about forty years since) she had been wholly taken up in studying the genealogical and critical history of all the persons present; so exact was the account she gave me of them. The whole detail was given in a low voice, and in such an apparent intimacy, that every one at table concluded we were particularly acquainted, and that the Duke had brought me along with him to oblige this lady. They were deceived, for this was the first time of my seeing her; but her ridicule was too diverting not to be pleased with having her so near me.

After supper, Cards. The Marchioness did me the favour of making me one of her party,

party, and committed a thousand extravagancies, all to my honour, which every one perceived. At twelve, the Duke said it was time to retire, as we were to go early next morning to a hunting match.

I went to my bed with my head full of what had passed, and not without condemning those women, who imagine that the necessity of posting up indecency, (if I may be allowed the expression) is attached to the distinguished rank they hold in the world. It will be easily judged, that I made a comparison, upon this occasion, between the Marchioness and Hortensia, and that all the honour redounded to the latter.

Next morning, we were betimes in the field, and the death of two boars afforded good diversion, particularly to our Ladies, who were all on horseback. The Marchioness was deservedly well mounted, being very graceful on horseback. She stuck to me, as my shadow, the whole day, and her agreeable forwardness and petulancy began to make some impression upon my mind. She had a surprising sprightly wit, which made whole hours of her conversation pass as minutes. The salt of most ingenious slander with which she seasoned it, hindered me from finding the praises, she incessantly lavished upon herself, insipid.

I knew

I knew then, by experience, that it is impossible not to find something agreeable in the person of a woman, whose mind pleases. I examined the Marchioness, with a desire to find her lovely, and I observed, with satisfaction, that she was neither tall, nor little, but of an agreeable size and shape.

Every thing is interesting for a woman, in a man on whom she has views. The Marchioness having penetrated into my thoughts, wanted to stimulate my desires, and complained of her stirrup's being too long. As we were distant from the main body of the hunters and alone, I alighted from my horse, and was much less taken up with the stirrup, than with a very handsome leg, which I had occasion to see in adjusting it. I lengthened and shortened it several times, and the Marchioness did not find it right, till she was satisfied that I had fully surveyed the beauties which she intended to expose to my view. I mounted my horse, and we joined the company. I perceived, as we rode, that she had large black eyes full of fire, a beautiful skin, with coal-black hair; that her mouth was a little larger than painters usually make them, but she opened it gracefully, to shew a set of teeth too beautiful to be concealed. I remarked, however, that the bloom of youth
was

was wanting, and that the whole of her countenance, on a general view, swelled her age to forty; but I turned in a moment to the youthful beauty of her mind, and there fixed my imagination.

We returned to the castle, and supper, which was served the moment we arrived, being ended by nine o'clock, different parties were formed to employ the remainder of the evening. The Marchioness, who did not play, no more than I, proposed a turn in the garden, and as the company were one way or other taken up, we slipped out of the Saloon, without being observed (of which circumstance she made me take notice) and went directly to the garden.

For this evening she gave a truce to satire and slander, and only spoke of herself and me. Her first words were a gentle reprimand for prolonging the work of her stirrup in the wood, and gazing with eagerness on her leg. I answered, without ceremony, that I was not accustomed to shut my eyes when any beautiful object struck my sight. A little gallant tap was the price of my compliment, which gave me a fair opportunity to seize and kiss the hand. Have done, said she; such fooleries do not pass with a woman of my age. I answered in a comical manner, that I neither knew her age, nor if there was an
age,

age, in which a man was not to kiss a fine Lady's hand. She made me understand, that young women having time to make their lovers go through a tedious trial of sighs, might give themselves the diversion of increasing their love, by stimulating their desires with such minute favours; but that those, who were a little advanced in years, were willing to employ the present time, the more usefully, as their pretensions to futurity were more precarious. All this was said with as much fire as delicacy; and to let her know that I perfectly understood what was meant, I turned towards a thick grove at the foot of the garden. The Lady guessed at my intention, and followed me. As we were going along, she asked what age I gave her. Love has no age, replied I; he has continued an infant from the beginning of the world. Ah! how lovely is he, said she, advancing, to put me in mind to steal a kiss. Do you know, Sir, that it is impossible to please me more than you do? I could wish, that I were but just now entering my twentieth year. I should, in that case, love you to distraction. You are not, in my eyes, so old, Madam, said I. How charmed should I be, replied she, if in this compliment your tongue spoke the sentiments of your heart. By this time we were now got into the grove, where they had made

made different cabinets surrounded with agreeable beds of verdure. Obscurity and our desires gave us no time to chuse. We entered the first that presented itself. As the Marchioness was better acquainted than I with the place, she led the way, and instead of sitting down, she (inadvertently, no doubt) fell upon the mossy bed; I followed, and, as chance would have it, fell upon her, and there remained. The situation was charming for both of us, not by sentiment, but voluptuous pleasure. When we had repaired, as much as the night would permit, the disorder of this fall, we made a reciprocal declaration of love, more political than sincere. But I am mistaken; for when things are carried to such a length, there is more or less love, were it of no more duration than the present moment.

People would be too happy could they always employ the time according to their wishes; but that is absolutely impossible. Man's pleasures, as well as pains, are momentary. He cannot hinder intervals from separating the most delicious moments, and all his address consists in rendering them less irksome.

It is of this address that a man has occasion with a woman for whom he is indifferent. The ecstasy of pleasure passes like

lightening. The languid man remains; he opens his eyes, and sees nothing that really affects him. He accuses himself of deceiving a woman who sometimes does not deserve it. These reflexions render him gloomy and thoughtful; but new excitements are practised, Reason is eclipsed, Voluptuousness re-assumes new life, and he is guilty of more follies than he had the minute before condemned.

I was thus with the Marchioness. The darkness favoured me, as it prevented her from reading in my eyes the distaste that attends an involuntary triumph. But she knew better than any how to make a proper use of the present, and communicated to me this her wondrous talent. My Reflections disappeared; a pallid appetite was revived by the idea of Pleasure, I felt its animating power, I abandoned myself to it. My transports were so brisk and multiplied, that I myself was surprised, and what is more extraordinary, when we left the grove where the delicious scene had been so gallantly acted, my amorous fit still continued. Voluptuousness adds to the beauty of many women, or, at least, unveils, and presents it in a more favourable light. We returned to the castle, and upon entering the Saloon, which was finely illuminated, I threw a
glance

glance at the Marchioness, found her adorable; and that instant determined my passion in her favour.

The company separated a little after, retiring to their several apartments. I was no sooner in mine than I began to reflect on the scene of pleasure which I had but just finished with the Marchioness; but a sudden thought of Hortensia came to put a stop to my joy; all my love for her rekindled, and greatly lessened that which a minute before I thought I felt for another.

The good opinion we have of a Mistress supports our passion for her much better than the idea of her charms, and the pleasure which she gives: we may imagine others as beautiful, but none so faithful, nor so capable of making her lover completely happy.

It was not long before I accused myself of acting most basely and dishonourably by the same Hortensia, who loved me to distraction, and who spent, in the most cruel languor, and even grief, the days of my absence. These reflections tormented me for some time; but at length, as persons absent are generally thought to be in the wrong, the inclination I had for the Marchioness lessened my love for Hortensia, and I resolved to follow my good fortune. I was flattered with the thoughts of having a woman of quality; this idea amused me,

and I cherished it in many different shapes. But as disquietudes always succeed one another, particularly in embarrassing situations, it came into my mind that if I embarked in a regular intrigue with the Marchioness, Hortensia might come to the knowledge of it. I laid down a scheme which I thought would effectually prevent this. All projects appear good when we form and examine them alone, and the pleasure I had in fancying mine extremely well concerted soon lulled me asleep, not doubting in the least of the success of my enterprizes.

Next morning my laquais awaked me with a message from the Marchioness, who sent to know if I would come and drink tea with her. This attention flattered me. I dressed in a moment, and went to wait upon the obliging Lady. She was in bed, and made excuses for receiving me in the disorder of a night-dress; but as I could perceive that she had been at some pains to prepare herself for my reception, I put a proper construction on this compliment. We drank tea, and then the waiting-maid, who was a very intelligent sort of a woman, discretely withdrew. We took the advantage of her absence to pass the time in the most agreeable manner we could. The Marchioness charmed me more than the evening before, having now a full prospect

prospect of charms, of which the visibility raised my delight to a higher pitch than the force of imagination could have produced.

Love is fond of night. Under its darkened shade reigns triumphant the voluptuous and extatic bliss. It is then we throw off the punctilios of decorum, decency, and all the little rules which Modesty prescribes, and which are constantly recommending its practice, without preventing its destruction. In obscurity, passion alone conducts to happiness. It equally inspires the two lovers; by pointing out to the one the road he ought to follow, it obliges the other to serve him as a guide, to prevent his mistaking his way. The difficulties are always equally divided. Scarce is any obstacle discovered by one, than the other employs all possible care to remove it. It is then we find a passionate Mistress in a woman, who by day seems to permit all, but to participate in nothing, and it is then we remark in another, who is naturally sensible of pleasure, transports so violent that they rise to madness, and are scarce to be bore, far less kept up to,

But on the other hand, day shews us all our happiness, at the same time that we feel it. It is legible in the bright eyes of a woman, where, by turns, reign the fire of passion, and the sweet languor occasioned

by the intoxicating extasy of love. Every glance that a lover darts at the object of his affection, is a new triumph for him. If the fair one keeps on the reserve, and is restrained by a sort of tyrannic decency; there are moments in which pleasure transports her far beyond those delicacies, and makes her throw them aside, forgetting what she is, or what she ought to be; and these moments are the most delicious that they have been purchased by others when freedom languished under the tyranny of constraint. In fine, the joy of having escaped the watchful Argues, the difficulty of getting to the place of rendezvous, the dread of being surpris'd, the satisfaction of seeing one another again, and the necessity of a separation from this medley of pain and pleasure, are so many shades; which embellish and heighten the pleasures of the day. Fine cloaths and dress, sometimes the enemies of love, and often its victims, serve to amuse in the short intervals of cessation by day, and they are even capable of augmenting the pleasure, when they are so artfully disposed, as to heighten beauty, and display its graces.

The following days passed between the Marchioness and me in an uninterrupted round of happiness. Our pleasures were mul-

multiplied by opportunities, and augmented by the variety with which she seasoned them, and which rendered them always new to me. At last the time of our separation and return to Paris came. The lady and I concerted measures to continue our correspondence in town, and promised mutually to fulfil our engagements. On my part, there was more of politeness than sincerity in the promise I made, because I did not think it possible to keep my new amour a secret from Hortensia, with whom, all things considered, I resolved to keep well, for some time only, my love for her being on the declining hand. The good graces of a woman of quality are a powerful motive to infidelity and change in a young Financier. It operated greatly with me, and I was so intoxicated with a conquest so brilliant, that I persuaded myself a second time that all could be managed as I thought proper.

I was fully resolved to alight at Hortensia's the moment I arrived, but an express from Paris, about an hour before our departure, with an account of my Mother's being dangerously ill, and that she desired to see me, determined me to be gone directly. I took the Duke's chaise, and posted to Paris. The projects of gallantry gave place, in my mind, to a heavy load of grief. I loved my

Mother, who had always been excessively fond of me. I found her at the last extremity, environed by all the Physicians of Paris, assembled in consultation upon the pretext which they should give to her death. Alas! one of the faculty is enough to kill twenty sick persons; how should one be able to resist a hundred of them got together? After kissing my Mother's hand, which I wet with tears, I remained in her chamber to be present at the consultation.

All these gentlemen, with that gravity inseparable from the formalities practised in the like cases, and which shew, but too evidently, how little they think themselves concerned, felt her pulse one after another, and one, in the name of the whole body, asked some questions about what he judged to be her ailment. She denied all, but he took no notice of what she said, being very well assured that she was deceived. Without asking what pains she felt other than what he had named, he made a sign to the Fraternity, upon which they filed off to an adjoining parlour, observing, in their going out of the sick person's chamber, as well as going into the saloon, their proper ranks according to the times of their reception into the Faculty. When they were all commodiously seated, my Father's Physician gave, in the

the Æsculapean jargon, the history of the distemper from its birth to the present hour, throwing in, under the name of important observations, the most childish remarks. He had taken great care, he said, to make them, and they were the fruit of a most scrupulous enquiry, and a most fatiguing attendance (this last was true for he had no coach). To this he added a most exact and ample recapitulation of his prescriptions, with proper encomiums on his own capacity, and, in short, exaggerating upon the whole, with more art, than justice. I was tired to death with the stupid harangue of the pedantic Orator, but all this was nothing. Every member of the consultation spoke in order, as they had walked: so that the youngest began, and the oldest was the last who gave his opinion. My Father was rich, and known to be so; it was presumed that the consultation would be largely paid, and therefore it was made in the most solemn and ample manner. Every one of them repeated the account the first had given, in more, or less studied terms, with the addition of ornaments as the speaker had more or less capacity. They unanimously concluded with an ordonnance in form of advice, that the sick person had been, till then, well governed by the Physician of the family, and that there was

no danger ; and that in order to prevent accidents, the must take such or such medicines. Our family Doctor had business enough upon his hands, with the bows of acknowledgment which the incense every now and then thrown upon him by the fraternity, obliged him to make to them one after another. In fine, my Father and I were desired to calm our alarms, they answered for a life so dear to us, a simple, but infallible, remedy was ordered, and then the assembly broke up : but the order of going out was quite different from that of the entry ; the old going first, and the young in the rear : not one of them saluted us, all their civilities were reserved for a laquais placed in the anti-chamber, who paid a louis for each bow that was made him.

My Mother died an hour after in taking the sovereign remedy prescribed by this august assembly. We gave to this loss all the regrets that it deserved, that is to say, we were inconsolable. About three hours after, my father, having recovered the use of his reason, sent for a Commissary to put the seals upon his effects, in order, he said, to settle matters with his children, my brother and me.

This brother, of whom I have said but little hitherto, was a sort of Stoic, who made a jest of Reason till such time as he should acquire it. He had always equally despised

despised all sorts of conditions, and had not as yet determin'd himself to give the preference to any. He was in England when my Mother's death happened. He intended, as he told us, to make the tour of Europe, and, by his travels, qualify himself for affairs of State, which he thought alone worthy of his attention. The truth was, that he indulged his indolence in foreign countries, because he had perceived that it had displeased at Paris. In order to give it an air of consideration, he covered it with the cloak of Philosophy, which happily became him pretty well.

His Philosophy, however, did not make him forget his Interest. So soon as he had the news of my Mother's death, he returned to Paris less rich than when he left it, without having reaped much advantage, as to prudentials, from his travels. He wanted to see the posture of his affairs, and if I did not take the advantage of his absence to enrich myself at his expence.

So soon as my mournings were ready I went to visit my lovely Marchioness, who had sent regularly every day to enquire about me. I thanked her for her attention with all the passion that warmed my heart. She seemed highly pleased with my acknowledgements, and I tasted with her the first moment

of pleasure which I had enjoyed since my Mother's death. Some visits hindered the Lady from comforting me, as she could have wished, for the loss I had lately sustained; at which we were equally vexed, for I stood much in need of consolation, and she would have taken great pleasure in giving it me. I remained a quarter of an hour with the company, and then retired, on pretence of business.

It is very certain that I did not feel any more symptoms of love about me for Hortensia. I had even some difficulty to determine myself to see her; nevertheless, I resolved to call upon her; were it upon no other account, than the four hundred louis, which I did not intend to give her. It was therefore necessary that I should go and get the money, and take a final leave of her, with an intention to make her a present of the furniture if she behaved tolerably well when she knew that I was to leave her.

I went to her lodging, but what was my surprise when I found the door of her apartment open, but no Hortensia, nor any furniture! I called for the landlord, who told me that he was very much concerned at the loss of such a tenant, but that since the apartment did not please me, he had nothing to say. I interrupted him, confessing that
what

what he said was a mystery which I did not understand. The poor man, who simply spoke the truth, told me, that, the next day after my departure, Mademoiselle Hortensia had sent for him, and told him that I did not chuse she should continue longer in that house, and that I had hired an apartment for her in Richelieu-street; that after this short preamble, she had paid him the current quarter's rent, and had moved her goods the same day. I asked if he had her direction, but none had been left. I sent to the office, of the Opera, and the answer given there was, that Mademoiselle Hortensia had asked her dismissal, which was granted about fifteen days before. In short, after many fruitless enquiries, I was well convinced that this very honest damsel had robbed me of my four hundred louis, and to the value of seven or eight thousand livres in furniture, jewels, and cloaths. I was mad with rage. Self-love suffers in a young man when he finds he is bit.

I communicated my disaster to my Father, who laughed heartily at it. His ralleries piqued me, and spite comforted me, the more readily as this compassionate Father had the generosity to take up my note of fourteen thousand livres to the Usurers. In delivering it, he told me that he had been
informed

informed of this negociation two days after it was finished, and that he had also been informed of my Mistress's elopement, but had not thought proper to prevent it, that I might, at my cost, learn to be wiser. He gave me, upon this occasion, very judicious advices, which would have been of great service, had I been courageous enough to have put them in practice. He laid his commands on me never to entertain an Opera-girl. It is (said he) assuming the air of a man of quality, which does not become you. Take a Mistress, I am not against it, but if you are not reasonable enough to fix by inclination, take a woman who has nothing, and by no means suffer her to affect the woman of consequence, or to assume airs above her sphere. All the ridicules of a little Mistress are accomplishments for her, but defects for her lover.

Some days after, it came into my mind to ask the Abbé Lenoir news of his pupil my Mistress; but he neither came, nor gave himself the trouble of sending me an answer; which put me in a passion. I sought him at the playhouses, with a design to speak to him, but found him no where.

One evening as I was returning from the suburbs of St. Germain, where I had supped, coming out of Le-Bac-street, I perceived my
Abbé

Abbé walking on foot. I made my coachman stop, and called to him: as he could not then give me the slip, he approached, and saluted me. I offered to set him down at his door, which he accepted, and placed himself in the coach. Our conversation was short, but sharp. I related my misfortune with Hortensia in that pathetic tone, which the concern of being a considerable loser always gives. He laughed at my misfortune, and told me insolently, that I was rich, and a Financier, and that my being the dupe was in character. I thought this pleasantry the more inexcusable in his mouth, as he had brought me acquainted with the person of whom I complained. I signified my discontent in very plain terms, by degrees our discourse grew warm, and rose at last to such a height, that I was tempted, more than once, to throw him out of the coach into the street, but reflecting that his death might be as prejudicial to me, as that of an honest man, I endeavoured to restrain my anger, and thought of nothing but to get rid of him as soon as I could. At last we arrived at his house, and as he was obliged to pass by me, before he could get out, he gave his cane to my laquais that he might get down more commodiously. This little circumstance struck me, and I could not resist the temptation.

tation. I jumped out of the coach, snatched the cane out of the servant's hand, and regaled my Abbé with a score of hearty strokes, telling him my reasons in a very intelligible manner. This done, I threw the cane into a cellar-window, got into my coach, and ordered my coachman to drive as fast as possible.

My Father was in bed and asleep when I came home. I awaked him and recounted every particular circumstance of my adventure. He chid me severely, and made me sensible that this affair might be attended with very bad consequences. I could not but approve his reasons, and blame myself; because nothing is so near a foolish action, as the repentance of having committed it.

Next day I went to communicate this scene to some of my most powerful friends, who were in a condition to give a check to the Abbé's prosecution, in case he intended any such thing against me. They calmed my fears, by assuring me that he had gone through a great many such adventures, without making any noise; which made me hope that he would be as favourable to me as he had been to others, since I had done him no greater harm. From that time, far from having a pique against me, this pious Ecclesiastic set a good example before me of pardoning injuries.

He

He loaded me with all sort of civilities, and even offered, in order to repair the injury his scholar had done me, to procure me acquaintances upon whose probity he could more firmly rely. But I do not easily pardon, and I find that one has a long journey to make before he regains my confidence.

Some time after, my Father, who was then in his sixty-ninth year, divided his estate into two parts, absolutely equal in all respects; and leaving me, in quality of first-born, the choice of my part, my brother had the other; after this he made the proper dispositions for his retiring to a seat he had in Normandy. He told us he was very certain that he had but a year to live, and that he would carry only a thousand louis along with him to defray his expence, and to make some pious foundations for the relief of the poor in his estate, having no occasion for any more; that he would remain in the country during the fine season, return to Paris in the month of October following, and die the spring thereafter. We employed all the arguments we could think of to free him from such a gloomy idea, but he set out in full belief of what he had told us.

In all ages, old men have had a toleration to doatage. At Paris it is a right which fathers acquire from the time they set themselves

selves to criticise the conduct of their children. Such was the reflection which my brother made me make on all that our Father had done and said. We believed that his stay in Normandy, and the pleasure he would there enjoy (a happiness to which he was hitherto a stranger, having passed the greatest part of his life in the hurry of business) would dissipate an idea so chimerical as that of certain death at a precise period.

My brother bought a great many books, and I coaches, horses and trinkets. We sold our furniture, he with a view to have plainer and less costly, and I more magnificent. He gave up all correspondence with the few friends he had, and I kept well with mine, and made new ones as occasion offered.

I still kept a correspondence with the Marchioness, and her commerce pleased me so much, that she began to be absolutely necessary to my happiness, when I was no more so to hers.

This Lady loved assiduoufness, which was not what I excelled in. She perceived it, and without seeming to take any notice of it, entered upon a treaty with a certain Knight of Malta, young and handsome. When it was concluded, she told me of it. I was surpris'd, and she laugh'd; I was griev'd, and

and she made a jest of me. In short, she condescended to tell me her reasons, which I found ingenious and solid, so that we parted in tolerable good friendship for persons who had gone through all the scenes of love without feeling it.

The Chevalier whispered his adventure to about a dozen of his friends upon condition of the most inviolable secrecy. Every one of them handed it about in the same manner, so that in a week all Paris knew this affair. I was a little piqued at my being thus sacrificed, because I observed that a great many pretty women laughed at the trick the Marchioness had played me, without any intention of supplying her place in my heart.

I went often to the Baroness Dal ***, a brilliant Lady, if ever there was one, and at the summit of high life. She was well shaped, with fine eyes, full of that languishing softness that characterises a propensity to voluptuous pleasure. The whole of her countenance was charming, and indicated a good deal of wit, which she really possessed in a more eminent degree than this looking-glass represented it.

Her humour was such as she pleased to have it. She changed it twenty times in an hour, with so much address, that in suffering
by

by her variableness, we could not but acknowledge that she was nevertheless amiable. Capricious with her equals, imperious with her inferiors, and never really in her proper trim, but when she was face to face with her betters, a thing that happened as seldom as she could.

Slander, sometimes delicate, and sometimes scurrilous, was the soul of her conversation; she spoke the prettiest things in the world, and with such vivacity, that often she did not give time for approbation otherwise than by signs; a *Petite-maitresse* by profession, condescending in private, indecent in public; deciding in every thing, and deciding well; in a word, she had, in her composition, all that was necessary to make one extravagant woman, and another worthy of esteem.

The history of my intrigue with the Marchioness was brought upon the carpet in her house; she, as well as all the company, laughed heartily at it, but upon my coming in accidentally, all was hush. The circle that day appearing to me to be composed of a dull set of people, I made my visit short. The Lady of the house whispered in my ear, that I might go where I pleased, but that she insisted upon a promise of my returning to sup with her. I trembled at the thoughts of this supper, at which I imagined I was to have the

the same company. I hurried from one play-house to another, in hopes of finding some one that would engage me to disappoint the Baroness, but to no purpose; it was decided that I should obey her, which I accordingly did.

I found with her in the evening Madam la Presidente D***, and the Chevalier D***, two lovely young people, who languished under the embarras of making a choice. The Baroness had determined that they should be good friends, and they both found an inexpressible pleasure in following her intentions. The little Lady Presidente was a downright novice, having only left her father's house about six months, a man extremely rich and lumpish. In this miser's house there was no reception for company, nor any discourse on things or persons that did not belong to the family; so that she owed the little taste she had for society, to the lessons she had received at the Convent from her dancing-master, and from a pretty woman confined in it by order of her husband, for having dared to be as fond of spending money as he,

Persuaded of the necessity that a woman in high life is under of having a lover, to prevent her falling into discredit, she made no use of the liberty, which marriage gave her,

her, but to seek out occasions of setting off her charms, and improving the talents that nature had endowed her with. She had acquired the indolent air and that languishing tone of voice which the Coquettes have adopted. This accomplishment had the advantage of being accompanied and supported by a very pretty face, a simplicity that tolerably supplied the want of wit; by jewels, paint, and a great deal of money. All this together made a woman lovely enough to afford pleasure in forming her for high life.

The Baroness had at first taken this charge upon herself, and her scholar had the more reason to hope for success, as she received her instruction from a woman extremely capable, provided she applied to others what she had learned for herself. But the Baroness, considering that the advices of Love are always better received than those of Friendship, had given this employment to the Chevalier, who seemed to acquit himself perfectly well.

The conversation was for some time general, but at length Madam la Presidente, more amorous than polite, took her dear Chevalier aside, without troubling herself what was to become of me, whom she ought to have looked upon as a new acquaintance, and to whom,

whom, in that quality, she owed some regard. This was a breach of good manners, of which I took but little notice, easily excusing the lady, as she was young and handsome; qualities which always assure a woman of all her follies being as quickly pardoned as committed. Besides, it would have been ridiculous to imagine that a Financer's daughter and a Magistrate's wife should be really a polite woman.

Politeness is the daughter of Nature and of Education. Formerly it was an extraordinary accomplishment, and those who happened not to be endowed with it, were not the less esteemed. Now it is a quality absolutely necessary to the man of fashion, and he is only regarded, in the world, as he possesses it, in a more or less eminent degree.

It is with men's conduct in society as with arts and sciences. A trifle, a mere nothing, is capable of giving a perfection which has escaped the most profound meditations, and the most careful enquiries. Two children of a spectacle-maker at play in their father's shop, put by chance two glasses opposite to one another, and looking through them to the steeple of their parish church, it appeared greater than it was. They communicated this discovery to their father, who took the hint, and was the first who made the

the spying-glass. So that it is to a childish play that we owe an invention so useful.

Compliments and salutations, which are but childish formalities, have produced as happy an effect upon our manners. The practice of the ceremonial leads us insensibly to that of the virtues, and by obliging us to perform the duties that they owe to others, it secures to us a suitable return from them. By it we begin to affect sweetness of temper, complaisance, compassion, and justice; and by habit we become really what we affected to be, and what we never would have been by taste for these virtues.

But this virtue (for in effect Politeness is one) does not properly belong to mankind in general. Courtiers seem to be in the possession of it to the exclusion of all other conditions, and this would be true were they not extravagantly lavish in their testimonies of Politeness. They have the ease and dignity, which are the two qualities that not only serve to render it amiable, but which alone can make people of sense bear with what is frivolous in it.

These reflexions entertained me while the Baroness was writing an answer to a pressing letter that had been brought her. When she had done writing, she joined me, and told me, without any sort of ceremony, that she believed I was in love with her, and the question

question was, to know if she was deceived. I answered, that I was too happy in her perceiving what I felt for her. We quickly made up matters, throwing aside the ceremonial, that usually serves as a prelude to love-declarations, as well as that which follows them. She confessed, ingenuously, that she was free, having lately quarrelled with the President D***, husband to the Lady I had seen; that she had resolved to love no one but her husband, but that this project had rendered him more odious to her, and that she absolutely renounced it; that the amour of the Chevalier and the President's wife had determined her to embark anew, and that she would willingly accept of me as a companion in the voyage she intended to make, once more, to Cytherea.

In the mean time, the conversation was close and warm at the other end of the room. The Chevalier found himself under no manner of constraint by my presence. The Lady gave him her hand to kiss, and he did not fail to do more than what she seemed to allow. He went from the hand to the mouth, and from the mouth to the bosom with an astonishing rapidity. I observed every motion of this amorous pair, and made the Baroness do so too, with a view to engage her not to allow me to remain idle in full sight of so fair an exam-

ple. She gave me to understand, that, one day, we might be as agreeably employed, but that she must first know me better, and, in one word, that I must purchase her favours by a passion equal to the Chevalier's. This law was imposed upon me in a decisive tone, which tied me down to the most exact and submissive respect, and at the same time insufferably tiresome. Word was brought that supper was served. I ventured to kiss the Baroness's hand, as I was leading her to the dining-room, upon which she gave me a look of indignation very humbling. The first part of supper was passed in great silence. Thereafter we entered into a conversation, which at last became lively and diverting. We all four said whatever entered into our thoughts, beginning with gaiety, and ending with folly.

When it came to the desert, the domesticks retired. The Baroness told the President's Lady and the Chevalier, that I appeared amiable in her eyes, that she thought matters might be easily adjusted betwixt her and me, and that if I would deserve her affection, she should readily grant it. I received a great many congratulatory compliments from the other Lady and her lover upon this declaration; and that they might not be behind-hand with the Baroness, in point of confidence, they

they gave a particular detail of their affairs, which was not very necessary, since I had learned, from their late familiarities, very near as much as they could tell me. We drank to our inclinations, and copiously. Our Ladies loved the sparkling Champagne. The Chevalier gave me a sign to make them drink. I did my best, and thanks to Bacchus, our Belles did honour to the luscious juice of the grape. In the mean time, he amused them with a thousand little projects of *parties quarrées* *, of which he traced the plans with humour, and no hurry, and I took care to make our goddeses every now and then express their satisfaction in a glass of approbation. In fine, when he thought them elevated to the pitch he desired, we rose from table, and were scarce got into the drawing-room when the Baron arrived, and I never saw a man whose presence displeased me more than his did at this critical juncture. He made me a great many polite compliments, and, thereafter, said abundance of fine things to Madame la Presidente, during which, the Chevalier told me that we had all lost a glorious opportunity, because his mistress and mine were charming after a glass extraordinary of their favourite nectar. This explica-

* Two men, and two women.

tion only served to augment my vexation, but as there was no remedy, we were obliged to put the best face upon it, and quit the field ; which we did in a little time after.

The nearer I thought myself to the happy minute, the more my spleen rose against the Baron, whose presence had put it out of my reach ; and I resolved to indemnify myself, at his expence, for the mortification which he had given me. The only question was to find a proper opportunity for the execution of my project, and as I had reason to believe that the Baroness would embrace it with equal pleasure, I depended upon her contrivance, and care, to procure it. I visited her assiduously, and was always well received ; but intruders came constantly upon us. Some moments of half-privacies were contrived, which were enough to speak of my love, but too little to give proofs of it. Mean while, the Baroness began to declare herself openly in my favour, and, that none might doubt of it, made me accompany her to all the houses of her acquaintance. She made use of my coach, while I drove about in hers. I waited of her often to the plays, and did not stir from her box. In fine, our commerce was so well established in the general opinion of people of fashion and galantry, that wherever she was, they were assured to find me.

She

She appeared to see with pleasure that the world believed we were intimate friends, and promised me, a thousand times, to realise the reputation I had of being in her good graces; but still nothing ensued. She always found pretences to disappoint my chief and, indeed, only aim, and when I became too pressing, she proposed a *partie quarrée* supper, with the Chevalier and his Mistress, which made me think that I should then see an end of my sufferings: but this party was always broke. Madame la Presidente pretended to be sick, some unexpected affair prevented the Chevalier, the Baron had taken it in his head to sup at home; or, in short, the Baroness was capricious. She told me, without ceremony, that she was in a bad humour, and that she would chuse another day more favourable for me. I do not know what charm she made use of to captivate me, but the more she made me suffer, the more I loved her. Nevertheless, by degrees, I discovered her failings. She had the most dangerous tongue of all Paris. With the most cutting satyr she diverted the men at the expence of the women, and with these she vented her spleen against our sex. She was gay at the first course, ill-natured at the second, impertinent at the third, and insupportable at the desert. Some friends opened my eyes, and I saw that

she made me share in her extravagancies, that the women shunned her company without being afraid of her, and that the men made her visits without esteeming her.

These observations were a mortification to my passion and self-love; but they amounted to no more than this, that I pitied my own case, and continued to love this woman with all her defects; such was my destiny. The more my esteem diminished, the more pressing I was, in hopes that enjoyment would extinguish a passion which I could not help thinking ridiculous. The address of the Baroness held pace with my solicitations, and at the end of four months, I was just as far advanced as the first day. A man of sense, to whom I communicated my case, advised me to pretend love elsewhere. I followed this counsel, and the same woman, who thought I was her dupe, soon became mine. She turned furious, when she understood that I had been seen at the Opera with a Farmer-General's wife, a very pretty woman, and very capable, in all respects, to give jealousy. She was at a grand entertainment where this was reported, as the news of the day, by a person who owed her no good-will. She could not conceal her uneasiness: she was complimented upon her sensibility, and was made game of during the whole evening.

The

The next day she sent to invite me to dinner; but I returned for answer, that I was engaged at Madame *****'s, precisely the Lady with whom I had been at the Opera the evening before. The Baronefs was but slenderly acquainted with her, however she sent to beg permission to make one of her company at dinner, and she was the first person I perceived on my coming in. Nothing looks so silly as an honest man, who is sensible of his being in the wrong. The thought, alone, of having done amiss by this woman, put me out of countenance. My confusion was taken notice of, and means used to dispel it, which embarrassed me still the more. The mistress of the house, who, with all Paris, was let into the secret of our intrigue, did what lay in her power to hinder my being pointed at; and to my great good luck succeeded at last. In the belief that my confusion was not minded, I forgot it myself, and reassumed my usual tranquility. We dined as people dine at a Farmer-General's, that is to say, well, and a large company. Every time that I turned my eyes towards the Baronefs, I found hers fixed on me. I was twenty times tempted to pretend sickness, that I might get away; but reflecting that all this worthy company, who now only whispered their jests upon my confusion,

would speak their remarks aloud when I was gone, I resolved to stand my ground. I even put on an air of gaiety, which however was not so apparent as the affectation of which I had occasion to support it. At length dinner ended, and the parties at cards were made while we drank our coffee. They had the malice to leave the Baroness and me at liberty to do what we thought proper. In the interim my coach arrived, and I proposed to be gone; she laid hold of the opportunity, and begged I would reconduct her home. As I could not, in good manners, refuse her so small a favour, I led her down stairs, and away we drove.

Neither of us opened our mouths in the way to her house. We were both too much taken up with the thoughts of what we should say upon our arrival there. The Baroness asked the porter, if her husband was gone out. Yes, Madam, said he, my master is gone to Versailles. This little question was made, with an intention that I should hear the answer; and I was as much vexed at the Baron's absence now, as I was displeased four months ago with his presence. In passing through the anti-chamber, she ordered a footman to go and acquaint the porter, that come who would, she was not at home. The saloon was illuminated with a dozen of wax candles

candles repeated and multiplied in the mirrors. Had I not heard the orders given to the porter, I should have judged, that this apparatus was in expectation of company; but as that could not be the case, I concluded that my stratagem had succeeded, and that all this preparation had been made for my reception. This attention rendered the Baroness more beautiful in my eyes, and I was not only fool enough to thank her for it, but likewise to confess my stratagem, begging pardon, and protesting that the excess of my love alone had made me culpable. Thus became I my own accuser, and as I resolved to display, in the most ample manner, the sentiments of my heart, my passion made me speak long, and utter many foolish things. She heard all with great calmness, and still greater surprize, and told me very seriously, when I left off speaking; Truly, Sir, it must be allowed that you act the lover to perfection. I am very much tempted to believe, that you are not more attached to me, than to Madam ****, and that you pay your court to me only, to make some other believe that you love me. In vain, I told her that she was deceived; it was impossible to recover her from this ridiculous idea. The violence of my transports might have convinced her of their sincerity, could she have been affected by them; but

she only suffered them out of complaisance, or by way of amusement. I had laid hold of her arms, which were pretty enough. I covered them with kisses, full of that fire capable to animate marble. My attitude had her mouth and bosom at my discretion, and I lavished on them my ardent homage, with all the discretion of which a lover, impatient to enjoy, is capable. Her faint resistance scarce sufficed to give variety to my pleasures, and was not capable of diminishing them. It may be easily believed, that I gained a great deal of ground in a short time. I made such progress, and with such facility, that I should have been surprized at it, had I had but time to reflect. But I was amorous, and gave myself up to the impetuosity of a passion the more violent, as it had the longer suffered under constraint, which now vanished by my being made happy. After the delirious moment, which was but short, I perceived, with more surprize than pleasure, that nature had but too much facilitated the execution of my designs, which the address of the Baroness had retarded four long months. The tranquility with which she received the passionate proofs of my love, cooled its ardour. I fixed my eyes upon those of my Belle, with a view to find, in the agitation of her soul, a remedy to the inaction

in which I remained, shameful for her charms and my love. But we were to part discontented with one another. I made some efforts of decency, in order to make a new assault on this fortress, which had supported so many sieges, that scarce were there remaining any vestiges of fortification. But the Baroness stopped my career, and did me pleasure. It is enough, said she, my complaisance cannot keep up with your love. You would have me participate in your pleasures, which is impossible; I do not love you enough for that. You have been a humble suitor, I have done what you required; we are now quit. We are not fit for one another, but may be for others. Adieu. After this gallant declaration, pronounced with an astonishing phlegm, the Baroness embraced me, made a curtesy, and went into a closet, where she shut herself up. As for me, after remaining a quarter of an hour almost stupified, I took my hat and sword and went out, persuaded that a person may find the moments, which he flatters himself to pass agreeably, very dull and tiresome.

Several persons had gone through the same scene with the Baroness. She was mistress of the art of changing it, according to circumstances, which made a curious and entertaining piece of history. One of her ancient

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lovers made a discovery of her manner to several others who dined with him one day that I was a guest there. Our common mistress was the subject of conversation, every one recounted the history of his amours with her, and I could not help furnishing my article to this Scandalous Gazette. Thus we men believe that we dishonour women by publishing their galantries. But would we but reflect on it, we should find, that such dangerous discourses only serve to throw a blemish upon our own judgments, since we are always equally concerned in the follies with which we accuse them.

Some days after, I received from my Baroness the following letter.

*I have reflected, Sir, on what has passed between us. I find that we parted but indifferently, that the fault is mine, and in order to repair it, I think myself obliged to make this acknowledgment. I thought you was really in love with Madam ****; your change piqued me, and I wanted to bring you back, by granting a favour, the refusal of which made you leave me. You did wrong in confessing that your infidelity was not real, since thereby you dissipated an illusion that flattered me, and I had no pleasure in rewarding love, at a time when I designed to rekindle it. Weigh my reasons, endeavour to find them good, and you will sensibly oblige,* LA BARONNE DAL ****.

The procedure of this Lady had entirely cured me of the ridiculous passion which I had for her. I had no mind to dispute her reasons, which made me the more easily find them good, and obey her commands. I formed the design of going to see my father in Normandy. I thought that being without business at Paris, I failed in my duty to my father, in leaving him so long alone at his country seat. This fine reflection occurred, because there is no time wherein we are more taken up with family duties, or those of society, than when we have no love affairs upon our hands. I communicated my project to my brother, in order to engage him to go along with me, but he declined it, on pretence that my Father might be offended at our coming to disturb the peace of his solitude: besides, he was very much taken up in reading a long and instructive book, and could not interrupt his study. I laughed at his whim, and set out two days after.

I went post in my chaise, accompanied by a valet de chambre and two footmen on horseback. About thirty leagues from Paris, I intended to stop some time to give my servants a little rest, who had been greatly fatigued with bad horses, and a constant rain since we set out. I was told that the post-house had but indifferent accommodation,
and

and having enquired if there was any better inns in the place, was directed to the Golden lion.

I was conducted to the best chamber in the inn, and a servant-maid came and told me, that her mistress would come immediately to pay her respects to me. I answered coldly, that I did not desire any such attention; but she insisted it was the custom, and therefore, to end the dispute, I told the maid that I was ready to receive her mistress, when she thought proper to come.

She came accordingly, and it may be judged how great was my surprise, when, turning about to look at her, I discovered in the person of my landlady, that Hortensia formerly an opera-goddess and my Mistress, and now reduced to the station of no better than a servant in a publick house. Her astonishment could only be compared to mine. She threw herself at my feet, shedding floods of tears, asking me pardon with the more earnestness as she stood really in need of it. I raised her up, embraced her, and only said that I was not vexed but upon her account, who must ever accuse herself of having deceived an honest man, who did not deserve it. She acknowledged her fault, and I pardoned her.

Forbidden

Forbidden fruit is always delicious. Hortensia appeared to me more beautiful than ever, and marriage seemed to have given her new charms. I told her so; she appeared well pleased with my encomiums, and very much disposed to prove, in what manner I thought proper, her grateful acknowledgment of my goodness; But, said she, I have a husband, and you domesticks, who carefully observe us. Difficulty increased our desires, we mutually acknowledged it, and this confession made them still rise higher. The husband intended to go next day to a fair about ten leagues distant from the town, and where he had several things to sell. Hortensia promised, if I would stay, to pass the night with me that she was to be alone; and the affair being settled we parted, and agreed not to speak to one another before the appointed time, lest we should give umbrage to the husband, a little inclined to jealousy, as well as to an old valet whom he had placed as a spy upon his wife, when he was obliged to be absent, which happened too often for his quiet, and perhaps for his honour. The night appeared to me less tedious than the next day, because, after I had as it were lost myself in the delicious ideas of the pleasure which I hoped for, I fell asleep.

The

The husband actually set out next day. I had the precaution to order my valet de chambre, the only one of my domesticks who had seen Hortensia at Paris, to behave as if he did not know her, and not to make the least mention of her to any mortal. I supped early, and ordered my servants to go to bed, that they might be ready next morning betimes, in case I thought proper to set out. My orders were executed.

The travellers who lodged in the inn, had not so much complaisance for me, as to go to bed. Two of them fell to play after supper, for a moment, as they said; but this moment was of long duration. Hortensia, who was in the practice of being the last that went to bed in her house, waited with great impatience till the gamesters were gone, and heartily prayed for them within herself; telling them, every now and then, that it was late. They promised to leave off, but still continued playing. The old spy slept peaceably in the corner of the chimney; she awaked him, and pretending a violent headache, told him that she would go to bed, and ordered him to furnish the gamesters what they had occasion for, that is to say, wine and candles. He accepted the commission, and she flew to my chamber, about twelve o'clock. Instead of complaining of the ob-
stacle

stacle that had so long prevented our meeting, we only thought of redeeming lost time. Hortensia had for me all the charms of a passionate Mistress, and I loved her to distraction. She bought the pardon of her fault, by a thousand voluptuous attentions, of which I never thought her capable. Scarce had we been an hour together, when we heard a great noise in the yard of the inn, and on the stairs. Hortensia was half dead with fear. I could say but little to dissipate her fright, I knew not what was the matter; but it was not long before we were made acquainted with the cause. The old valet called his mistress, with all the strength of his lungs. He at last came to my chamber-door, and finding the key in it, which I had left for Hortensia, came in without ceremony. I lifted up the corner of the hanging, Hortensia put the bed cloths over her head, and fear threw her into a fainting fit. What do you want? said I to the valet in a very angry tone. Sir, answered he with tears in his eyes, I come to you for assistance. There are two men below, who have been gaming the whole night, they have quarrelled and fought; and as one of them lies without motion, I believe he is dead. I want my mistress, to know what is to be done. Her chamber is open, and I find that she has not
been

been in bed. Have pity, Sir, continued he, on a poor domestick, who is ruined and undone. I own that the circumstance was perplexing, and stunned me not a little; however, Reason soon got uppermost. I got out of bed in my night-gown, and desiring the old fellow to be easy, I took my pistols, and locking the door when I left the room, went down to the hall, where I found my people exposed to all the fury of the gamester who had killed his comrade. Despair rendered him stronger than they, and he certainly would have lamed, if not killed, one or other of them, had I not appeared. The sight of a cocked pistol calmed him much. He threw himself on his knees before me, and begged his life. I had him seized, and bound with ropes. After this operation, I called my valet de chambre aside, and ordered him to take post horses directly, and go to a place four leagues distant, where he was to buy four horses, such as he could find, and at any price, provided two of them were proper for my chaise, and the two others for the saddle, and to wait with these horses at the place I mentioned, by break of day. I gave strict commands to all who were in the inn, not to make the least noise. I spoke high, had an air of distinction, and was obeyed. I saw the dead man, who had fallen
backwards

backwards upon the stone pavement, and split his skull exactly in two. They promised to do whatever I thought proper, but they were all uneasy about what I intended to do, and though I put the best face I could upon things, I was more embarrassed than any of them.

I went up to my chamber, locking the door when I was in it. I found Hortensia more dead than alive. In this state of alarms, to which every body is sensible, I found her beautiful as an Angel, and loved her more than ever. I embraced her with tears in my eyes, for I could not refuse them to the misfortune of which I was innocently the cause. I told her very briefly all that I had seen, and ended with what was of the greatest consequence and most embarrassing, that she had not been found in her chamber; for which there was no salvo. If you are afraid of your husband, added I, trust to me, I offer you a retreat at Paris. She threw her arms about my neck, and told me in a tone that would have softened the hardest and most insensible heart; Alas! can I get away from this place? Yes, answered I, if you have but a little resolution. I had two laquais, the one tall, and the other less, almost of the size of Hortensia. I made this last take my riding coat and one of my hats, and gave him
orders

orders to climb over a little wall at the lower end of the yard, and go and join my valet de chambre. I saw him get over the wall without being perceived by any one; and this done, I went into the hall of the inn, where the whole people of the house were assembled. It was then about three in the morning. I told them, that one of my people was not in a condition to ride, having been seized with a paralitick fit, occasioned by the sight of the scene that had been acted in the inn, and that being unwilling to make any longer stay there, I had resolved to put him in my chaise, and to ride on horseback myself to ***, a gentleman's seat about two leagues from that town; which I named on purpose that they might think I was to stay there. I spoke with an air of authority, and they honestly believed every word I said. Great encomiums were made on my tenderness towards the sick man, and none of them had the least suspicion of the truth. I called aside Hortensia's old valet, who appeared to be master. I told him, that in the forenoon he must go and report what had happened to the proper magistrate, at the same time delivering up the murderer, and the body of the dead man; that he must be particularly careful not to say that the mistress of the house was missing, because her evasion might give occasion

occasion to suspect she was concerned in the murder that had been committed; which must give great grief to his master. He relished my reasons, and promised to follow my advice exactly. I gave him two louis for the expence I had made in the house, making him a present of what was to be returned to me out of that sum, which did not a little contribute to make him approve of every step I had taken. After I had, in this manner, settled every thing, I sent the only servant I had now with me for post horses. During his absence, I went up to my chamber, where I spent the time I would have taken up about breakfast, in disguising Hortensia. I wrapped up this poor woman in a livery great coat, which I had kept on purpose; a large woollen cap covered almost her whole face, and a pair of my shoes, which did not at all fit, made her gait very agreeable to the part of a sick person which she was to act. When I judged that the horses were ready to come, I called a servant-maid, who assisted her mistress, on one side, without knowing her, while I supported her on the other. We went in this manner down stairs into the yard. I made Hortensia get into my chaise, and shut all the glasses before any one appeared. The horses arrived. I told my laquais, in a low voice, to remain
near

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near the chaise, and to take care that no body looked into it. I always had an absolute power over my domesticks, and I always found the advantage of it. I then went up again to my chamber, dressed alone, and came down again instantly. A servant-maid followed me with my night equipage, which I threw into the chaise. I put on my laquais boots who had gone over the wall, mounted one of the horses, my servant the other, and at half an hour past five we left this fatal inn.

At a hundred paces from the house, a crown I gave the postillion, made the horses fly. Upon our arrival at ****, I found my valet de chambre and my other laquais waiting for me. They had four plough horses, very indifferent, which necessity obliged me to take at the price of twenty louis. I ordered three of them to be put to the chaise, and mounted the fourth myself. I took a peasant for postillion, and left all my people there, with orders to return to Paris in the stage coach. I took the bye-roads, and the third day arrived at N*** thirty leagues from Paris, and forty from whence I had set out. Two of my horses died upon my arrival, but that gave me no trouble, because my journey was performed. I alighted at the Collector's of the Aides, whose wife had been
my

my nurse. I rested there eight days. My nurse, at my desire, got cloaths made for Hortensia, simple enough to speak the truth, but more proper for a Lady that travels, than for a country innkeeper's wife going to bed. I had a foster brother, a stout well-made young fellow, who served in the guards. He told me of a *diligence* of four places, in good condition, that was to be sold. I went to see it, and as it did not displease me, he prevailed with me to buy it. For his brokerage, I offered him a place in it to Paris, where he was to go in fifteen days, to enter upon his quarterly duty. He accepted my offer, and he, Hortensia, and I, set out the next day in my new diligence. The peasant, who had served as a postillion before, followed us now on horseback. I had the precaution to bring him along with me, that he might be the longer absent from his own country, where he might perhaps, suspecting that the Lady who was with me might be Hortensia, tell his suspicions, if the news of her elopement reached the place of his residence; and to this precaution I added another, which was to order it so that he had not once seen her face. All this care and circumspection was necessary upon such an occasion. I made a present to my nurse of my two remaining horses, which she was to dispose of as she could. I stopped at a place three leagues from

from Paris to dine, where I largely rewarded the peasant, and gave him leave to return home. He thanked me, and I saw him no more. As I had a house in Paris of my own, since my Father had left it, I thought it was needless to hire an apartment for Hortensia, and therefore gave her one in my own house, where she saw no body but me, and the young fellow that came along with us, and who staid ten or twelve days with us. I considered, that it was impossible that Hortensia could live in so melancholy a solitude. I mentioned it to her, and she confessed that she was very dull and lonesome when I was not with her. It was, however, impossible for me to be always at home. I was obliged to see my friends, none of whom knew her, and I spoke of her to no mortal. I looked upon her as a treasure, lost for me should any else make a discovery of it. We lived together for four months in perfect harmony, and as persons who were never to part. But my Father returned from Normandy. He alighted at my house, and I was so taken up with him, that I scarce could have the pleasure of passing one hour a day with Hortensia.

He asked to lodge at my house; first embarrassed. I gave him my own apartment. I had taken a house fit for a bachelor, in which there was accommodation for a great many domesticks, and but for one single master.

I was

I was obliged to dislodge Hortensia, for whom my valet de chambre hired a furnished room about a hundred paces from my house, and where he placed her by my order.

My Father ordered every thing that he had left in the house which he occupied before he left Paris, to be transported to mine. There was but little furniture, a great many papers, jewels, and money. He employed two days with me in examining all the jewels and trinkets. He confessed ingenuously, that they belonged to a great many people, to whom he had formerly lent different sums, and who probably were dead without being able to repay the money and redeem these pledges. He gave me a little note of the names and places of abode of some of them who were still alive, with orders to restore what belonged to them immediately after his death, and without letting them know from whence they came; and as for the others he ordered me to sell them, and to bestow the money they produced upon the poor, without saying any thing of the matter to my brother. I promised to obey his orders in every point, and I have exactly kept my word. Not a day passed without his telling us that he should very soon die, and we were extremely grieved to see that he continued to be struck with such an idea.

We earnestly begged of him not to speak of it to us; he was indeed so complaisant, but he constantly thought of it, and acted as a man who judged himself near his end. He sent one evening for his Confessor, to whom he notified his approaching death. This Ecclesiastic did all he could to make him relinquish such a thought, but my Father reasoned with him in so solid a manner, that he was at a loss what answer to make. He heard his confession, but absolutely refused to bring him the Viaticum, saying, that he was capable of going and receiving it in the church. My Father made no reply. He supped well, and sat long at table with the Confessor, my brother, and me. On leaving us, he ordered my brother to come next morning at nine in his coach, to go with us to several places where we had all three business. As he was not fond of explications, we desired none, though we were very curious to know what the matter was. My brother was exact, and we set out at the hour appointed for the Grand Chatelet, where we concerted measures for the deliverance of some prisoners, particularly of those whom they call Collectors of the Tailles. We went from thence to the Little Chatelet, to Fort l'Evêque, and to the Conciergerie, where we performed the same work. My father deli-
vered

vered me the account, which amounted to thirty thousand livres, for sixteen prisoners. We went thereafter to mass, which being ended, he received the communion in a manner so edifying, that even I, whom want of habit had rendered but very indifferent about religion, was greatly moved. We returned from the church to my house, and upon our arrival my father thus addressed us. Let us, my children, pray to God that he would have mercy on me, who am a great sinner; to morrow, at this hour, you will have no father. As he was undressing, he gave all his cloaths to his people; this, with other things in the same decisive manner, began to make us very uneasy. We sent again for his Confessor, he received him well, made him dine with us, and constantly spoke of his death, but so familiarly, and with so much freedom, that scarce could the slightest affairs be treated with more tranquility. When dinner was ended, he begged his Confessor would allow him to speak to us in private: the priest retired. My Father exhorted us, with all the earnestness that accompanies an ardent desire of obtaining what is asked, to stand to the division he had made of his estates and effects between us, without ever attempting, voluntarily or otherwise, to make any alteration in it. We promised

to obey. Upon which, he gave us an exact share of all that he had remaining, a hundred thousand livres ready money excepted, of which thirty were destined to gaol-deliveries, and the remainder to be given as rewards to his servants, whom he put in a condition to live without serving any other after him. My brother wanted that he should only leave them annuities, that the capitals might remain to us after their deaths; but his proposal was not listened to. After this, my Father called in his Confessor, with whom he remained alone till night came on. We all four supped once more together, my Father ate heartily, and spoke with a presence of mind which astonished us, in a man so singularly struck with the certainty of his death. He desired we would pass the night with him; during which, we were employed in reciting psalms, of which he exactly pronounced his verse, and in an exalted voice. At six in the morning he interrupted his prayers, and having made my brother and me come close up to him, embraced us tenderly, and covered our faces with his tears. Alas! said he, how foolish is man, to be attached to others, since he cannot avoid losing them! Adieu, my children. I leave you and we are lost to one another Here sighs and groans tied up his tongue. The tears
came

came rushing in streams from our eyes, and we threw ourselves at the feet of this venerable old man, who after raising us up with that goodness, of which a father alone is capable, continued his discourse in this manner. I am not disquieted to see that neither of you are in a settled state. Whatever employment you might have taken, you would have found in the exercise of it but too many occasions of doing more ill than good. But it grieves me to leave you in the world as you now are. Learn you, my son, addressing himself to me, that what you call a free and amusing life, soon conducts to libertinism and debauchery; and you, Dumont (the name of my brother) that nothing is so remote from true philosophy, as the misanthropy to which you give yourself up. I had not the good fortune of an education, experience alone formed me. I have often thought of happiness, and here is, in my opinion, what you ought to do, in order to procure it so complete as man is capable of enjoying it while upon earth: Riches are necessary, but mediocrity is still more so. You have each of you about fifty thousand livres yearly rent; give the half of it annually to the poor, and give it yourselves; have the pleasure of knowing those whom you oblige, and the extent of the services which you render them. Let the re-

mainder of your fortune be certain, on a good footing, well acquired, and in short, neither give you remorse nor embarras. Of twenty five thousand livres, which you will have yearly remaining, only spend two thirds, and let the surplus be always exactly reserved, to extricate you in those critical circumstances, which are called misfortunes and maladies. Let your house be rather neat than magnificent, and less adorned than commodious. Books well chosen, and friends still more so. No master, and but few domesticks. Be always so much employed as never to be tired with indolence; and so much at leisure as never to be fatigued with your occupations. Have no ambition, and you will be exempted from envy and law-suits. Let all your Philosophy center in Christianity, which is true wisdom. Love merit wherever you find it. Be punctual to your word. Inspect into every thing at home, but shut your eyes every where else. Curiosity is nearly allied to criticism, which renders men contemptible. Seek no friends in a sex different from your own; otherwise Love steals easily into the heart, and, but too often for the misfortune of those whom it inspires, takes there imperceptibly the place of Friendship. In fine, be really what you would appear to be in the eyes of the publick. This last precept comprises all the others. After

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After having ended this discourse, my Father took up again a book, and approaching to a candle, read aloud, and standing, above an hour. At seven, a demand was made for the money to discharge the prisoners, which himself paid. At nine, these poor people were brought to return him thanks; he received them well, embraced every one of them, desiring the benefit of their prayers. The moment they were gone, he embraced my brother and me without speaking, and thereafter went and placed himself in an elbow-chair, where he remained half an hour, his face covered with his hands, in the attitude of a man wrapt up in deep contemplation. My pendulum struck ten, and that moment he cried out, Farewell, my dear children; pray to God for me; and then died, shutting his eyes, and falling softly backwards into the elbow-chair, without feeling, to appearance, any sort of pain or agony.

I shall not attempt to make reflections upon an event so extraordinary, and which gave me no time to ruminate upon it. I dearly loved my Father, his loss plunged me into an excess of grief, that cannot be expressed, and the manner of his death touched me much less than his death itself. My brother, who affected an extravagant Stoicism, appeared very calm during the whole scene.

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He was for having the body opened, and I consented. Physicians and Surgeons were called, who, far from finding the cause of such a prodigy, declared, that they could not conceive how it was possible to die, with a body so well organised, and of which all the parts were so sound.

Four days after I had Hortensia brought to my house. I had absolutely occasion for company, being resolved not to stir out, at least in the beginning of my mourning.

I always blamed the liberty, which children, at the death of a father, husbands at that of a wife, take when the bodies are scarce in their graves, to go to assemblies, plays, and publick diversions; where they endeavour, by a most indecent gaiety, to convince the publick, that all their regrets are confined to the complaisance of dressing in black; this liberty, I repeat it, always appeared to me to be extremely ridiculous, and even injurious to humanity. I think a man who has any notion of decency, ought not to shew himself in publick places, until at least the time of wearing weepers is over. As every body is sensible, that business, and the cares of a family must be minded, it is natural to give allowance for amusement, as well as for business, after a reasonable time spent in retreat.

I passed

I passed two months *tête à tête* with Hortensia, very tedious in her account, and very agreeable in mine. One evening it came into my head, to ask how she became a country innkeeper's wife, which I had not yet ventured to do, for fear of mortifying her. She related the story exactly, and with a sincerity which made me overlook what was offensive in it.

While she remained in the apartment I had furnished for her, in the street called St. Thomas du Louvre, she made an agreement with the master of an eating-house, to supply her table at so much a head, which was very commodious for her, as likewise for me, who often carried my friends to her lodgings. This man's cook was a sturdy young fellow, of a tolerable figure, and an amorous complexion. Having learned that his master furnished a kept mistress, he had come one morning under pretence of receiving her orders. He presented himself in a very impudent manner; no bad way to be well received by an opera girl. She was extremely gracious; he returned a second time, and by degrees put himself upon the footing of making her regular visits, which she suffered the more readily, as she found the galant very amiable. It may be thought that he shared with me in Hortensia's favours; no such

thing; she had serious views upon him, and acted the vestal as well as she could. Happily her lover was too thick-skulled, to perceive how much the virtuous air sits awkward on a chorus nymph. He became passionate, resistance increased his desires; in short, he proposed marriage, and was favourably heard. His situation was enquired into, and his answer was that he had nothing. This declaration made a little abatement in Hortensia's inclination, but did not totally destroy it. He paid his court assiduously, and at last obtained love for love to the full. When matters were so far advanced, he proposed the carrying all off, and going to the country, where he might follow some business or other. Hortensia was highly provoked, used him ill, and banished him her presence. Some days after, I mentickelany going to the Duke's country seat, ~~some~~ ^{by} a favourable occasion for doing what her lover had advised, made her find his project more supportable. She sent for him; matters were compromised, and off they went two days after I was gone. Hortensia's waiting-maid embarrassed them; but this obstacle was obviated, by giving her permission to go and pass three days with a friend of hers some leagues from Paris, and when she returned the bird was flown.

The

The fortunate couple took the road, with easy journeys, to Normandy, the native country of the galant, and chance ordered it so, that their course was stopped in the town of ***, where the Golden lion inn was vacant, by the death of the late possessor. Hortensia's lover made her understand that this business was very proper for him, and very lucrative. She was in love with the person who made the proposal, so she readily consented to all, and they were accordingly installed. Their trade went tolerably well on, but Hortensia's views were as yet unaccomplished, since the marriage was not celebrated, to her great regret. Her lover refused to conclude it, on pretence that having given themselves out in town for man and wife, people would have a bad opinion of them, if they discovered the contrary. In the mean time, they did what it were to be wished every body might; that is to say, they made trial of one another, in order to marry afterwards when they thought proper. Hortensia, at first, exclaimed against this trial. Habit reconciles us to every thing: she began to relish it; particularly since she had discovered that her lover was of a very suspicious temper; from which she had concluded, that nothing worse than matrimony with him could happen to her. They were upon this

footing when I arrived. Hortensia was in the practice of visiting her guests, to know if they were well served, and no doubt to shew herself too. She knew me again, and was more surprised than intimidated, being persuaded that I was too good to do her any harm.

She failed not, in finishing her narration, to shed tears, but I wiped them off. In fine, she made me believe they were the effects of repentance for the fault she had committed in robbing me, and the pleasure of having found me again.

Two days thereafter, my foster brother, the lifeguard-man, having finished his quarter, came to receive my commands before he set out for the country. As he knew Hortensia by having travelled with her, he asked how she did. I thought this politeness in him proceeded from a regard to me, for which I reckoned myself obliged to him. I presented him to her, and for fifteen days that he staid at my house, we ate constantly all three together.

One evening, Hortensia asked me permission to go out next morning to buy some things, of which she had occasion; the permission she meant was money, and I let her have it. The lifeguard-man offered to accompany her,

her, provided she would be so complaisant as to chuse a gown, which he wanted to buy for his mother. I consented, upon condition that Hortensia paid for it, and that I should make this little present to my nurse. Next morning, I ordered two horses to be put to a little wheel carriage which I had, and which was, properly speaking, an intriguing coach, without arms, and the coachman without livery. I made no more use of it, since Hortensia was at my house. It was at her disposal, being unwilling she should make use of a hackney, for fear she should, without my knowledge, make some furtive visits to some of her old acquaintances. The lifeguard-man and she came to breakfast in my apartment. I told them that I did not intend to go abroad that forenoon, and that I resolved to spend it in settling some family affairs. They looked at one another, and then took coach at half an hour past nine. A little after they were gone, I began to be tired with my work; I was alone in the house, and therefore I resolved to take a ride out on horseback, which was one of my favourite diversions. When the mornings were fair I used to visit, by way of an airing, all the neighbouring parts of Paris. I had the reputation of a very graceful rider, and for that reason went frequently

quently out on horseback, as much to satisfy my little vanity, as for the preservation of health.

I rode a beautiful English horse that day, which I had lately bought. After having made several rounds at *the Star*, I took the way to the Wood of Boulogne. Chance conducted me to the gate Maillot, where I perceived the coach in which Hortensia and the lifeguard-man went out. It is easy to believe that I was extremely surprised. Scarce could I allow myself to think, that my nurse's son, who owed his fortune, as well as that of his family, to me, durst venture to carry off my Mistress. Nevertheless, as the thing spoke of itself, I could not but be persuaded of the truth. Having given my horse to the postillion, who attended me, to hold, I went into the tavern, where I immediately saw my coachman and laquais at breakfast very quietly. I asked them, in a tone of voice that made him tremble, what was become of Hortensia. The laquais got up, every joint shaking, and conducted me to the chamber, of which he opened the door.

What spectacle! I saw in the arms of another, that same Hortensia, who, two days before, had recounted the history of her crimes with the most penitential air, and high acknowledgments of my goodness. They then

then formed together a groupe, composed of two chairs and two bodies; the whole disposed in such a manner, that all the attractive charms of the one and the other were fully exposed to mutual view.

In endeavouring to disengage themselves, they both fell on the floor. I forgot what I had but the minute before seen; I ran to Hortensia, and lifted her up. She swooned away in my arms: I was apprehensive for her life, but my endeavours brought her to herself again. Bursting into tears, she threw herself at my feet. How moving was this attitude to me! I was weak enough to pardon her again; but happily had resolution enough not to own it; and, to tell the truth, it was all that I could do.

In the mean time, her gallant looked at me without opening his mouth; my silence embarrassed him. I made Hortensia leave the chamber, and I followed her. I conducted her to the coach, and placed myself in it with her, giving my horse to be led home by the postillion. In our way, I told her that she must prepare herself to leave me, who would no longer bear with her scandalous and ungrateful contrivances. She trembled and shook, and, after long sobbings, asked me, as the only and last favour, a small sum which might procure her a reception
into

into any convent I pleased to chuse for her. *We'll see,* said I, in a tone, of which, a moment after, I reproached myself the harshness. We got home, and I carried her into my closet. I there sent for the coachman and footman that had been at the Wood of Boulogne, paid them their wages in her presence, and dismissed them. They begged that I would forgive them, but begged in vain: they implored her protection; but in that instant she imagined, poor woman! the whole world could not protect herself.

Tears have on me a power which I never could resist. They raise in my mind the most perfect persuasion, and in my heart the most tender compassion for those whom I see plunged in affliction. If their grief should happen to be affected, I feel it really. This foible in me has been taken notice of by all my acquaintances; and it is to this defect that I owe my being so often made a dupe.

There is nothing, commonly, so deceitful as womens tears: they shed them when they think proper, and always more abundantly when they are least afflicted. Ovid says it was so in his time; this custom must be very useful, since the mode hath not as yet changed it.

The certainty we are under of being deceived by women, even in the very demonstrations

strations of their grief, does not destroy our sensibility. We become deaf to the voice that charges them with want of sincerity. We believe that real grief alone can excite tears and sighs ; and we pity those who abandon themselves to it, because we believe they are oppressed with the greatest evil that is in nature.

There is scarce any pain so pinching to a man as Melancholy; it may be truly termed the misery of Reason. Now, among the subjects that may occasion melancholy, is there any more difficult to be supported, than the infidelity of a woman whom we love ? Nature suffers in the deprivation of its pleasures ; Reason mourns for sincerity abused ; Self-love is highly provoked at another's being preferred to us. All this must render the grief of being deceived by the only woman in whom we placed entire confidence, insupportable. But the more the mind feels the evils with which we are attacked, the more it is solicitous to find out some means of comfort. The most powerful is the end of the evil. From thence, I believe, it comes, that we easily flatter ourselves with the hopes of regaining a giddy, inconsiderate Coquette ; this idea is a spark, of which self-love and voluptuousness soon form a great light. It dissipates the clouds of affection,
and

and rekindles in our heart a fire, the more fierce as it had ceased for some time to inflame it.

I do not know whether I have hit upon a proper justification of the weakness, with which I always yielded to the grief, counterfeit or true, of women who undertook to disarm me by their tears. If I have accounted for it to satisfaction, I shall be surprised at it myself; for after serious reflection, I do not see that any good reasons can be given, for a sentiment that is found in some and not in others. What is certain, is, that sensibility is not a vice of the heart. I dare even say, that it speaks its praise; since it excites us to ease the sufferings of a fellow creature, and the affliction which we then feel, does not hinder our patience from being a virtue.

I had so far mastered my love for Hortensia, but Passion, with a rapidity equal to that of lightning, bore down my resentment. I participated in the situation of this poor girl, or rather, had a more lively sense of it than she, since I accused myself as the author of her misfortune. In the very moment of my being thus busied with various reflections, I heard my porter's whistle. As I did not know by whom I was to be visited, and being unwilling that a woman should be seen with me, in such a condition as Hortensia's at that time,

time, I desired her to go up by a back stair through my closet, to her own apartment; she obeyed without opening her mouth. Word was brought me, that the lifeguard-man, who had been the cause of the unhappy affair that disturbed the peace of my house, wanted to speak to me. I made him wait, that he might not see me in my present agitation; but half an hour made no change upon me, rather the contrary, for which reason I ordered the servant to tell him that I could not now speak to him; but he sent back word that he would wait. His obstinacy enraged me, I admitted him. He put on a free and contented air, saluted me in a Cavalier manner; telling me that he was surprised I had so much business upon my hands; that he did not think I was capable of falling out with Hortensia for such a trifle, and that should I do so, I would be much to blame; that I ought not to be angry at the party they had made together, because I might have expected it; that these sort of creatures always took where they could, and that every thing was good to them. It is not unlikely, said I interrupting him, since she listened to such a one as you. I thought by saying so to give his impudence a check: not at all; it only served to increase it, and to make him blab out a hundred extravagant things. He plainly

plainly and positively accused Hortensia of having solicited him, and pretended that she had led him to the Wood of Boulogne, without his knowledge, and, in a manner, against his will.

I have already said, that this young fellow was indebted to me for his small fortune. In effect, when he and I came to the world, his parents had nothing so much at heart as to get out of it, since they could no longer subsist in it. Some misfortunes, with bad conduct, had reduced them to the greatest misery. A laquais to a man-midwife of Paris procured them his master's protection, who being charged with the care of providing me a nurse, had brought those poor people from their own country. The wife was placed in my Father's house, who procured a gauger's place for the husband; and remembering that the late Madam Versorand his mother had often reflected, in his presence, on several citizens in Paris, whose children she had nursed, when she was only mistress of a poor cottage in a country village, because they had done nothing for her family, he resolved to prevent such snow balls being thrown at him.

My foster father did his duty but very indifferently, yet as he was warmly protected, he was advanced more than others who deserved better. In fine, about ten years after, he was appointed

appointed collector ; and having remained in that post more than twenty five years, had scraped together a good fortune. The son, flushed as well with the prospect of a fortune from his father, as by the benefactions with which I loaded him, despised his father's business, and by the credit of my friends I got him into the king's body guards, where he behaved tolerably well. The presents I made him were better to him than a hundred pistoles yearly, so that he was advanced to the age of thirty without any expence to his father.

I thought myself obliged to this short detail, to justify the surprise in which his talking so big and so impertinently, put me. Indignation and contempt hindered me from upbraiding him. I contented myself with telling him, that he had used me ungratefully in all respects, and that I desired he would leave my house without ever setting foot more in it. The compliment stunned him, and he went off.

I left Hortensia in her chamber five days, without seeing her, ordering victuals to be carried to her regularly ; and below I entertained my friends. I frequented indifferent company, but numerous : the prettiest women in Paris made me parties ; I speak of women who take suppers from rakes that are rich. None of them had the least pretensions
to

to, or influence upon my heart. In fine, the sixth day in the morning, I went up to Hortensia's chamber without thought, and as I was accustomed to do before I had occasion to be angry with her : but I found her not. Her chamber-maid told me she was gone out ; this astonished me. Nevertheless, judging by myself, that her solitary life must be very tiresome, I began to excuse her, and her artful maid finished the work. This girl had wit, and spoke well. She calmed my resentment by a very ingenious encomium on her mistress. She spoke long and with great fire, not forgetting Hortensia's deep concern for her faults. In short, I promised to forget all, and to sup that evening with her.

I went down to my closet, where I wrote several letters to put off a supper, which I was to give that evening in the Wood of Boulogne. After I had done, I went to some of the toy-shops, where I bought several trifles. I saw a beautiful gold box, I bought it for Hortensia, as also three little pretty rings, the whole amounting to near a thousand crowns. These things were a present for the new marriage which I intended to celebrate that evening. I went to the Opera, where I staid till it was pretty late ; and when I returned home, I ordered the cloth to be laid in Hortensia's room, and went up a little
after

after in my night-gown. I held in my hand a box, in which was my present, and placing it on the chimney, saluted her with more passion than politeness. I advanced to embrace her, but she blushed and drew back. She told me, that if I was so good as to pardon her, she should esteem herself too happy; but in forgetting what was past, I must still nevertheless remember, that she did not deserve to regain my love. In so saying, she sat down at table, and I did the same. This air of reserve and humility affected me much. Our supper was short, we ate little, and spoke still less. In fine, when supper was ended and all removed, I made Hortensia sit down on a sofa, and I placed myself by her. I looked at her with the eyes of a lover, and she durst not lift hers on me. I took her hand and kissed it, this motion gave her a little courage; she gave me a languishing glance, and I saw the watry balls dancing in her fair eyes. I squeezed her hand, and advanced to embrace her; she suffered all trembling. I gave her twenty kisses, which quite confounded her. Heavy sobs made her breathless, she cried out in agony. Her tears ran down in such floods, that I was more astonished than moved, though I was very much so. What did she not say to me! Could a man give occasion to a woman's grief
whom

whom he loves, without feeling it, such a moment would be delicious. There is no greater pleasure than to see, prostrate at our feet, a woman whom we adore, asking a favour, which is in our power to grant. Hortensia begged of me, in the most tender manner, to forget her; to look upon her as a wretch, who had given me too great offence ever to be more familiar with her. In fine, by way of interruption, I took her in my arms, and lavished on her proofs of my tenderness, with all the passion of which I was capable. She made a thousand efforts to stop me, but my transports were so fierce and multiplied, that I conquered her resistance, and enjoyed more pleasure in her arms than ever I had tasted in my life. Ah! what have you done? said she, getting out of my hands. I looked at her with an astonishment not to be equalled. I had ground to think, that she was well enough accustomed with such scenes of pleasure, not to look upon what had passed as an extraordinary thing. She came and threw herself again at my feet, and clinging fast to them, begged I would give her the death which she pretended to have deserved. I listened to what she said, not being hitherto able to conceive the meaning of her discourse. She pressed me with so much earnestness, and her pitiful sobs were so moving, that I mixed

mixed my tears with hers. My sensibility augmented her grief. She told me that we were both ruined and undone: that if she had resisted me, it was with a view to prevent me from participating in her misfortune. The more she spoke, the less I understood her. Alas! said she, must I explain myself more? Well, know then, that within these two days I feel pains that I was unacquainted with before; and that the lifeguard-man has, no doubt, communicated to me the fruit of his debaucheries. I am not afraid for myself, I deserve death but too much. But you, Sir, . . . ah! I am quite desperate. I was very much struck with the idea of a distemper which I never before had, and for which I had the utmost horror. I remained some time without speaking, and even without thinking. But throwing my eyes on Hortensia, her condition made me tremble, and her grief became mine. I forgot the horrors to which I was going to be exposed; I did more, I endeavoured to banish her fears, and employed every thing I could think of to comfort her. In short, ought I to mention it? yes to be sure, since I was weak enough to do it. I pleaded with her to think no more of this misfortune, and swore that I would with pleasure share it with her. Her generosity dispensed with my giving her this proof

of my love; but the more she was obstinate in refusing, the more I became pressing. We passed the night together in a tender contention, and our pleasures were so lively, that I forgot the danger, and Hortensia the grief which my temerity had given her.

Next day, an hour of reflection sufficed to let me see the whole extent of the folly I had been guilty of. I had the discretion, however, to conceal my repentance from Hortensia. She confessed that the reason of her going out the day before, was to consult with a famous surgeon, that her waiting-maid had directed her to, who unfortunately was not at home. I ordered my coach to be got ready, and we went directly to the same place together. We told him ingenuously all that had passed, and he answered very calmly, that we were more afraid than hurt, and that if we would be discreet and follow advice, he would soon remove the cause of our fears. We promised to obey exactly his orders, which was no hard task to persons so much frightened as we were. He gave us remedies which we took together. The pleasure of seeing and loving supported us under our sufferings, and indeed diminished them. In the beginning we laid down a scheme of living together as good friends, and thinking no more of love. We called to mind a thousand exam-
ples

ples of people, to whose happiness nothing had been wanting, but the courage of supporting a commerce of solid friendship. Our experience furnished us with a fair proof of the disasters of love; but we did not dwell long upon this. Our own misfortunes carry a melancholy persuasion along with them; those of other people are more amusing. From thence it comes, that we chuse much rather to find foreign than domestick examples. We made daily some new regulation, in consequence of our grand design. The pains we felt, instead of weakening, fortified and improved our Ideas, and the plan of conduct which we formed at that time, would have been pretty enough had it been practicable. If it is possible for two persons of different sexes to confine themselves to the terms of friendship, they must, I apprehend, be no longer in the age when the passions reign; otherwise, this friendship is nothing else but love, to which they are pleased to give another name, without foregoing its pleasures, or being exempted from its cares. Besides, we must esteem our friend, respect his virtue and merit; without which there can be no true friendship. Upon this foundation, could Hortensia and I be good friends?

As it is natural enough to turn our eyes often on futurity, and eagerly to seek after

after what we had abandoned with contempt, all our fine projects vanished ; like unto those religious sailors whose piety is fervent during the storm, but is all over on the appearance of fair weather. Hortensia and I found our love of pleasure proportionably increasing as we drew near the time in which we could enjoy them. We were ourselves the criticks of the system of friendship, which we thought a little before the most glorious in the world ; but now, after a deliberate examination, found it to be the most ridiculous.

Already we looked upon the necessity of exactly obeying the surgeon, who took care of us, as a slavery, and imagined that it was more for his own sake than ours, he had enjoined continency in the strictest manner. The dread of evils with which he threatened us, was the only bridle that retained us in our duty. Hortensia encouraged me with all her power not to contribute to our shipwreck, when we were almost got into port. And as nothing persuades more than example, she told me, sometimes, the advantages which her comrades (in the time she belonged to the Opera) had reaped from a blind submission to the orders of their surgeon, and, sometimes, the misfortunes that had happened to those whom occasion, or necessity, had made rebels to his commands.

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It is incredible how much the incontinency of private persons is hurtful to the amusement of the public, and how much the use, or rather the abuse of charms, disorders that of talents.

One of Hortensia's friends having been admitted into the opera with a slight indisposition upon her, made one in the parties of suppers, at the time she first began to appear upon the stage. The poor girl having thus sacrificed herself to custom, had fallen dangerously sick a little time after. The art of physicians could not prevent her from a deafness, which, rendering her unfit for the stage as an actress, obliged her to put up with the title of honorary singer: a condition to which, in reality, is preserved a right upon publick pleasures, but where the most artful cannot make half the advantage of their charms, as those who are actually in exercise.

Another in a weak state of health, and whom the dread alone of being forgot, engaged to shew herself to the public (in whose homages consisted her whole dependance and fortune) not being able to withstand the brilliant proposals of a young Abbé, was furnished, in a very short time, with ample matter for reflection upon the follies of youth. She fancied to herself that she had at last got

the better of them, or, to speak more properly, of their melancholy effects; but the following year, a certain ugly humour having settled in one of her legs, totally deprived her of its use. An event the more insupportable, as it forced her to renounce the publick walks, the only places, after the stage, where beauty can seek resources against indigence.

A nymph of the same species, and in a fair way of recovery from a distemper which abused good-nature had brought upon her, having been so complaisant as to sup a whole night and day (that she might not disoblige a German Nobleman who wished her well, and seconded his wishes with deeds) found to her sad experience that this excess produced such an internal revolution, that the very next day she was as bad as she had been before. The recovery of her health was the loss of her voice, which was losing all, for she had neither wit nor beauty. In her misfortune were comprised a mother, already old, who had nothing to depend upon but the talent of rendering the pleasures of others useful to her; two brothers still young, whom a Financer, a lover of vocal musick, promised to place; and a sister young indeed, but so ugly and deformed, that she was only proper to accompany a handsome person to the royal Palace,

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in the character of a relation, whose business was to make friends, and to negotiate for her pretty cousin.

I shall say nothing of those who, by having been too soon tired with the deprivation of pleasures, had been ruined, or maltreated by their lovers: this would lead me too far. Besides, I am unwilling, by such details, to anticipate the pleasure of novelty which they will afford, when they shall appear in the Secret history of the Opera, in case any writer should take it into his head to favour the world with it.

In fine, the time came that we were to enjoy our liberty, which happened to be in the fine season, and I settled my affairs so as to go and pass it at one of my country seats with Hortensia; and accordingly so soon as the surgeon gave his *fiat*, we set out. We enjoyed, in this solitude, all the comforts attached to the unconstrained society of two persons warmed with mutual ardour, and whom past troubles and present pleasure render dear to one another. For these two motives equally augment love. In short, we here passed days all equal and all happy. Voluptuousness was the soul of our pleasures, and I dare, however, be bold to say, that our pleasures accorded with reason.

I do not mean by voluptuousness those irregular and dissolute pleasures which things sensual furnish, and which flow from a mind soft and delicate; but that taste which Reason itself gives for objects within the compass of our power, and to which it attaches a sort of felicity.

Mere sensual voluptuousness is infamous; it dreads the light, and even those who follow it in private, condemn it in public. But reasonable voluptuousness is no discredit to wisdom, and we are all naturally so attached to it, that the most severe rigorists are the people who, in private, are the most anxious to acquire it, and often fall, imperceptibly, into the most contemptible softness. The ordinary man takes no bye roads, but goes straight to the but, and without mystery. The bigot, or the pretended philosopher, conceals every step he takes to bring him to it. Which is most to be blamed? The last would seem to separate us from ourselves, by expelling our sentiments and passions. But is it not better to regulate them, than to destroy them and make of the rational man a lifeless statue? Why should it not be permitted to love, and to endeavour, with moderation, to obtain what is agreeable? Does reason sully the beauty of women, of flowers, or of day? Certainly it does not.

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It constantly furnishes comforts that render the evils attached to human nature more supportable. Voluptuousness is the light by which we perceive the excellence of all other things. Without it, our life would be no better than a confusion of cares and sorrows. In one word, the man whose Voluptuousness is superior to Reason, is his own vile slave; he whose Reason totally excludes it, is his own tyrant; and he ought to be neither the one nor the other.

The man of figure has a fine house, rich and costly furniture, gilded coaches, and fine horses, a table well served, handsome plate, domesticks well shaped and genteelly clothed. If he has a Mistress, he gives her diamonds, and magnificent apparel. Custom determines him in all these things as much as taste. The pretended Sage, in a house, of which the outside is disagreeable, has an apartment wherein none of the most sensual conveniences are wanting. He studies, in the distribution of this lodging, all that the most refined delicacy and softness can invent. His furniture shews no gold nor gilding, but the sculpture and varnish cost him more. His coaches are plain and without arms, but they have springs, and are lined with velvets of a modest colour and the dearest. His horses are black, but young and vigorous. He admits few to his

table, which is served with the best of every thing in its kind, in dishes not adorned with carvings, &c. but of excellent workmanship. His domesticks have a dull heavy air, are of all sizes and of all ages, but he chuses them so on purpose, and is better served than the first quality. If he is amorous, his Mistress is almost the only person who knows it, and by this means he is exempted from being at any great expence upon her; however, nothing is wanting to his Belle, provided, under a dress, at most citizen-like, she always affect a devout carriage, and lead an indolent but retired life. The least slip terrifies love. The visit of a neighbour, the reading of a romance, all are crimes in the eyes of a pious tyrant, and capable of destroying the peace of the family, and that for ever: for a bigot never pardons. The next day to the rupture, the Belle is cloystered, and by means of a small pension in a convent to which he is a benefactor, this holy man makes her do penance the rest of her days, for the enormous crime of pretending to divert herself for a few minutes.

Such is, literally, the difference of the conduct of one and the other. I ask, which of the two deserves the preference?

I led a life so delicious, and so agreeable to my taste, that I had almost forgot the rest of
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the world ; when an event, the more disagreeable the less I expected it, came to disturb the tranquillity I enjoyed. One day getting up early, according to custom, I was surprized not to find Hortensia, who used to sleep long and rise late. I imagined that she had taken the benefit of the cool morning for a walk : I resolved to surprise her, and with that intention went directly, in my night-gown and a cane in my hand, into the garden. It was very large, yet I visited every corner of it, without finding her. I passed from thence into the park, where I walked a long time but to no purpose. At length, wearied with walking for more than two hours, I lay down at the foot of a tree, and looking at my watch found it was but six o'clock. I examined this solitary place with delight. Wherever I directed my sight, I had an opportunity of admiring what various charms Nature displays, when Art has established a certain order in her productions. I made many reflections upon this subject, and the beauty of my park furnished me with ample matter. But they were interrupted by the arrival of one of my people, who had by chance taken his walk that way. He surprized me very much, when he told me I was a league and a half from home. I did not well know this estate, of which I was only

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master since the partition which my father had made, and never had been here before. I was too much fatigued to return on foot, for which reason I ordered this servant to go to the castle, and desire Hortensia to come where I was in a little open chaise which I had caused to be made for us, and which she drove with great dexterity. The chaise arrived. I asked the coachman about Hortensia, but he answered, that she could not be found, and that without doubt she must be in the park. The sun was turning strong, I was afraid the heat would fatigue her, and therefore rambled up and down in quest of her, till twelve o'clock, to prevent her returning home on foot. In fine, I walked the horses homeward, persuaded that she would be got into the house before me, or that she had taken another road: but neither one nor the other happened. After visiting the castle and garden, I was apprehensive that she had lost her way, or had hurt herself. I sent four men on horseback into the park, with orders to visit exactly all the different routes, but all their labour was in vain as well as mine. I went myself to the Curate's and to the houses of my farmers, but no news of Hortensia. I lived about a league from a large forest; I caused peasants to beat it over and over till the evening. In short,
night

night came on without my being a bit the wiser. It came into my mind to ask the waiting-maid if she knew where Hortensia was gone; but she had disappeared with her mistress. This discovery made me tremble. I saw that Hortensia abandoned me once more, and grief was like to kill me.

I passed two days in the terrible condition, in which a man has no greater enemy than himself; during which he delights in darkness, and seeks retirement, that he may there with freedom pass his melancholy hours in the remembrance of his misfortunes, fearing, as an addition to his affliction, the approach of any one who would attempt to comfort him. I fed upon my grief, and took a sort of pleasure in imagining that no event so fatal, could ever happen, as that of which I was the victim, and studied nothing but to render myself more unhappy. The Curate came to visit me; I was but little acquainted with him; he nevertheless esteemed me, though he saw me but seldom. My keeping company with Hortensia was a continual subject of scandal to him. He fancied I was blind enough to take no notice of a pretty sort of a niece who lived with him, or would imagine that by some canon of the church to me unknown, the priests had a permission to do precisely every thing they forbid.

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So soon as he understood that I was alone, he came, and, without mentioning religion, undertook to give me comfort by the mere dint of philosophy. I wanted to conceal from him how far I was sensible of the loss I had met with. Such females, said I, inspire more contempt than regret; upon which account I don't, as you see, abandon myself to grief. Sir, answered he, you are the more to be pitied, the less your affliction is ostentatious. He who vents his grief in complaints and lamentations, is but slightly touched. True grief is dumb. It seizes the heart, confounds the memory, corrupts the judgment, and weakens the mind and body. By throwing a man into a sort of nonentity, it bereaves him of all except the sensation of his misfortune. He must, however, extricate himself out of this abyss of woes. Consider, my dear Lord, that our life is a continued succession of pains and pleasures, as of nights and days. Reflect only, and you will be your own comforter. A generous reflection will, in a moment with you, do what Nature alone operates in the weakest minds by succession of time. Have you not told your friends, a thousand times, that it is a weakness to persist in our regrets for what is really lost? Nothing upon earth is strictly ours. Heaven gives us
all

all that it does not take from us, and when it deprives us of any thing, it only acts in consequence of a right. Time alone, my dear Lord, is capable of giving you comfort. I only ask you but a little resolution to stand the first brush, time will do the rest. There are no immortal evils for mortals. To accustom ourselves to live with our misfortunes, is a thing attainable. I will not endeavour to stop the tears which the loss you have sustained, forces from your eyes: on the contrary, I am for letting the wound bleed, which time will close up. You will, one day, be surprised to find yourself above your afflictions, as if you had ascended to that height from the bottom of an abyfs. Acknowledge that man is greatly to be pitied, since he is under the humbling necessity of making his felicity depend upon the constancy of a Woman, the most inconstant of all created beings.

I listened with great attention and calmness to the Priest's philosophical discourse. He out-did himself, and made, to speak the truth, astonishing efforts to persuade me, and they had this good effect, that I felt, as he proceeded, an idea of peace sliding softly into my mind, which greatly eased me. But the moment he was gone I fell again into a sort of delirium. I went up to Hortensia's chamber,

chamber, where I found every thing I had given her, except a very ordinary robe, with which she was gone. All was placed in great order, and seemingly not long since. At the sight of her jewels, I persuaded myself that some rival had carried her off, since she thought she had no occasion for any thing. Every thing that had belonged to her was the object of my regards, and gave me a certain pleasure in augmenting my grief. Ungrateful creature, said I, with as much passion as if she had been present, is it possible that so much love, so much goodness, and such care to please, could not retain thee! Thou flyest me, cruel woman. Ah! return, I love thee still. I am still ready to receive thee. I conjure thee by my tears, by the oaths of fidelity thou hast so often made me, (alas! this is all I have now remaining) by our pleasures, by the good I have done thee, and by the sweet satisfaction I found in making thee happy. I abandoned, for thy sake, the world that I loved; I sacrificed, to thee, parents, friends, the most agreeable acquaintances, and twenty occasions of marrying to advantage. Hortensia, my dear Hortensia, in what a deplorable condition hast thou left me! Here sighs and groans made me speechless. After pouring out a flood of tears, I sent to beg that

that my Curate would come again and speak to me, and he lost no time. A Priest was but melancholy company for a Libertine such as I was, but we take what we can find, and he was precisely the only thinking being within two leagues round me. I was still in Hortensia's chamber when he came. Ah! my dear, said I, upon perceiving him, come and see the whole extent of my misfortune. She has carried nothing with her. A new lover has, no doubt, taken upon him the care of her fortune. But where will she find one that will love her as I did? If she is abandoned by my rival, as she deserves, what will become of her? without money, without friends Ah! why can I not discover where she is! I would at least send her jewels, . . . This would be a sort of resource. Sir, continued I, let me beg of you to have it published every where, that if she is found she may be furnished with whatever she wants; he who will oblige her shall be my best friend.

The Curate let me speak so long as I thought proper, and he did well not to interrupt me, as nothing eases grief more than tears and complaints. Do you conceive, added I, a minute after, all the horror of my situation? Were I to tell you all that I have done for Hortensia Ah! a woman could not have been capable of such a black contrivance!

trivance! she formed, in my arms, the dismal project of her infidelity, and her conscience gave her no uneasiness for deceiving me to the very last with testimonies of her affection. She whom I drew out of the cruel jaws of misery, to whom I gave all that could satisfy love and vanity; in whom I pardoned the most cruel injury, whom I delivered from a man who was her tyrant. Hortensia! ah! ought I to have been participant of thy sufferings, since thou bore no part in my pleasures? was it kind in thee not to abandon me till I had bore all the pain of the evils which thy lightness had brought upon thee? Excuse these disagreeable expressions, said I to my Curate, but I cannot contain myself.... You see, as well as I, that I lose Hortensia: But, added I a moment after, do you think that I shall for ever lose her? do you conceive that she can live without me, since I cannot without her? I never gave her the least mortification. Alas! why does she leave me? where goes she? at least if she intended to part with me, she ought to have given me timely notice, that I might have prepared myself for this shocking scene.

In fine, time, as my Curate had foretold, softened the bitterness of my grief, and I accustomed myself, by degrees, with not seeing Hortensia. I returned to Paris to perfect

perfect my cure. Seven months that I was absent had brought about many changes there. The scene of love had often shifted. Those whom I left lovers, were embarked in new intrigues, and spoke of their former amours, as of old tales thread-bare and out of date. It was some time before I was fully informed of the present state of gallantry, and of all the childish particularities of the Scandalous Chronicle, which a man in high life must not be ignorant of.

When I had attained to what they call *the current*, I began to move in my former sphere, but with very little satisfaction; all my endeavours to forget Hortensia were so many Memento's, and though my grief was not in that violent agitation as when she left me, I was not however what we may call happy. One of my friends, a man as reasonable as it is possible to be in the high sphere of the polite world, advised me to confine my thoughts to the treacherous part of my Belle's character, in the wrongs she had done, in order to despise her. I resolved to follow his advice; but, I know not by what fatality, Hortensia's charms destroyed my reflections, and always baffled the motives of my resentment. Thus did I pass two years at Paris, and led in it, in spite of all the pleasures with which it abounds, a very disagreeable

able life. At length I returned to my country seat, persuaded that solitude alone was proper for my present state of mind, and that I should love, while I lived, a woman, who, perhaps, had never loved me one single minute.

I found my poor Curate almost in the same condition that he had seen me two years before. His pretended niece was dead about a month before my arrival, and he was inconsolable. I did for him what he had done for me, I sympathised with him in his affliction, and contributed to calm it. We soon became inseparable. Society was absolutely proper for me, and I relished it so as to put on a firm resolution never more to part with it. I proposed his quitting the Curacy (which brought him in about twelve hundred livres yearly) and to live with me sometimes at Paris, and sometimes in the country, as it happened. I offered him, with his table and lodging, two hundred pistoles a year. My offers were accepted, and as soon as he had settled his affairs we returned together to Paris.

The habit of living thus with a Priest familiarised me with Christianity, of which I had but very superficial ideas. I found in it a rampart proof against human weaknesses.

I then

I then recalled to remembrance my past life, and saw nothing in it but a series of disorders, of which God having given me the grace to repent sincerely, I consecrated the remainder of my life to piety. Reason conducts me in a route to which I was hitherto a perfect stranger. The advices of my Curate, who has promised to live and die with me, support me in the moments that the world calls me back to it. May Heaven grant that I live so to my last day. I shall always live as happy as it is possible to be upon earth, since I have the courage to be an honest man, and a good christian, amidst the alluring pleasures of Paris.

The End of the Second PART.

PART

PART III.

WHATEVER change may be wrought in us, first impressions are always with great difficulty effaced.

At the age of thirty two, a retired life became most agreeable to my inclination, and instead of assemblies, balls, and plays, the favourite amusements of my former days, I ran, for a whole year that I staid in Paris, from church to church to hear sermons, visited the Prisoners, and read, at home, what we call good books. Was this the characteristic of real devotion? By no means. I frequented the churches and prisons to see, and to be seen. My charities were extensive, but without merit, since vanity was their motive. All Paris had their eyes upon my conduct to turn it into ridicule: this pleased me, and I gloried in being thought a sot. Alas! our happiness depends on the ideas we have of things.

I was born to be the dupe of all those in whom I placed confidence; fate had decreed it so. My Curate, who was my comrade in devotion, made me a proposal, one day, of a fine meritorious work of charity. An old sinner in my neighbourhood, who was very rich,

rich, had taken notice of his coachman's daughter, a girl of fourteen and extremely handsome. He proposed to her parents to take a lease of their daughter's charms, at the rate of twelve thousand livres per annum. These good people, dazzled with the prospect of leading an easy comfortable life, were absolutely for concluding the bargain; but the little girl opposed it with all her might. She had come to throw herself at the Abbé's feet, who earnestly begged I would procure her a safe retreat; to which I consented. He made it his business to find out a convent, where he conducted, one evening, the beautiful Javotte, without her parents having the least suspicion of her evasion, and still less where she was gone.

Some days after, I was visited by a woman decently dressed in black, who called herself Prioress of the house into which Javotte had been admitted. I received her with all the politeness that I was capable of, which is saying a great deal, for, at that time, I had a profound respect for the ecclesiastical air, male or female; an error which time has fully unmasked. The Lady Prioress had been formerly a handsome woman, and did not seem to be displeased at her being told so. I do not know if this was the language of her convent, but she had all the airs of a woman
who

who believes herself still lovely. Her countenance carried her age to the limits of forty five, but she endeavour'd to give it the lye, by all the arts that monastic delicacy is capable of, even to affecting the mellifluous soft tone, and the agreeable lisp, which became her pretty well. She loaded me with praises for my goodness to Javotte, a tender lamb whom I had rescued from the wolf's mouth: all the crimes from which I had exempted her, were so many good actions for me. I wanted to elude the ideas of gallantry with which this encomium was capable of furnishing me. I had reason to be afraid of them; they multiplied infinitely in my imagination, and often flowed from the slightest cause. I insinuated that he who proposed to enrich Javotte had, perhaps, no designs against her virtue; but it was soon made appear that I spoke contrary to my thoughts, and, in order to convince me, a great many instances of such misfortunes were adduced, so that I yielded at last to the proofs that the most pious, and consequently the most respectable slander furnished.

We agreed on what I was to pay both for her pension and other necessaries. The Lady Priorefs, who wanted to come in for her share in the good action I did, conscientiously fixed the price at twelve hundred livres.

We

We dined together, and she favoured me with the history of the convent, from herself to her sister cook-maid, not forgetting to acquaint me that they were all young women of the first quality, who, despising the grandeurs of the age, had resolved to seek, in the cloyster, the holy tranquillity which they could not find in the world. In the evening I had her reconducted home in my coach, and had not afterwards the pleasure of her company but once in three months, when the quarterly pension fell due, which was always attended with some small expence extraordinary to be paid, which she proposed in so genteel and engaging a manner, that I durst not contest it; so that the pension swelled to fifteen hundred livres without my having the least dispute with this virtuous Lady.

Our Abbé went alone to visit Javotte, ten times for once that he mentioned it to me. I had been told that she was extremely pretty, that was enough to make me shun her sight. I knew myself weak, I often found incitements to launch out once more into pleasures, from which I had great difficulty to guard myself, and I only succeeded by carefully avoiding the occasions of succumbing. I therefore intirely trusted the care of Javotte's education to the Abbé and the Prioress; and it

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may be judged how greatly I was surprised, when my porter, one evening, gave me the following letter.

S I R,

*I*F it be you who has had the goodness to procure me a retreat, as I have reason to believe, grant me the permission to return you thanks personally. Refuse not this Favour to a poor girl in the most wretched state, and who would prefer death to the life she leads. Give orders that I may be conducted to your house, or come yourself to the convent. In a moment I shall have the honour to acquaint you with all my misfortunes. If it should be known that I have taken the liberty to write, I am a lost girl. Have pity on her who while she lives will remain,

Your most humble servant

JAVOTTE.

I did not know what to think of this letter. At first, I imagined it was the complaints of a child who looks upon the drudgeries of education as misfortunes: however, Javotte's solicitations appeared to be so pressing, that I could not help believing they had some foundation. The first mark of confidence I gave her was to keep the secret; which was no easy matter, for I had no reserve

serve with the Abbé. Next morning, that my people might not know where I intended to go, I got into a hackney coach and went unattended to the convent. The Lady Priorefs was juft gone out, and as no body elfe knew me, Javotte was not allowed to fee me. I told my name, with feveral other particular circumftances, but all to no purpofe. This obftinate refiftance pleafed me, I looked upon it as a proof of the regularity of the houfe; but a moment after I was piqued with the difficulties, and refolved abfolutely to furmount them. I had recourfe to the expedient which removes obftacles in the cloyfter as well as in the world. I gave a louis to the fifter who was door-keeper, and ſhe introduced me directly into a parlour, promifing that Javotte ſhould ſoon come to me, and indeed it was not long before ſhe appeared.

Though I had never ſeen her, yet her beauty told me it was ſhe. Her charms were the more powerful, as they had no aſſiſtance from art. They had no other ornament but the languifh and ſimplicity natural to indigence. Javotte was at fifteen as tall as girls uſually are at twenty. A mean and tattered drefs, ſcarce covered her; it was the ſame ſhe had on when carried to the convent. This did not, however, hinder me from obſerving,

at the first glance, that she was well shaped; that she had large eyes with a mixture of colours very agreeable; hair of the brightest black; a roman nose, a little mouth with teeth extremely white and even; the most beautiful skin, with natural colours more brilliant than those which art has invented to beautify the face. Farewel, Bigotry. Javotte threw herself upon her knees before me, at the same time that I was ready to kneel to her. Ah! Sir, said she in a flood of tears, is it you who has placed me here?

I told her it was, and recounted to her the particulars of every thing that had passed. Well, well, replied she, since God has vouchsafed me the grace to refuse being the Mistress of a man who offered to make my fortune, how could it possibly be imagined that I would yield to be the Mistress of a Priest?

Heaven! what do you tell me, cried I; respect the sacred character with which Ecclesiastics are clothed Nevertheless, beautiful Javotte, explain yourself, and depend upon me. I spoke to her with so much cordiality, that my frankness gave her courage; so that rising up and advancing close to the grate, she told me all the particulars of her unhappy story. The Abbé was in love with her; he went to see her almost every day, and though she was far from giving

ing him the least encouragement, still continued to speak of his passion. The Prioress seemed to favour his designs, since to reduce Javotte, she treated her with all the harshness imaginable, even to deprive her of all necessaries. It was not possible to doubt of the truth of what Javotte told me; every glance I threw at her furnished me with a new proof of the sincerity of her complaints. The Abbé gave her to understand, that the moment she became more tractable, he would procure her every thing she could desire, as fine cloaths, with other necessary implements, money in plenty, and even permission sometimes to go out with him. But the love of virtue, which is not confined to persons of high rank, and even seems more natural to the more abject state, was deeply rooted in the heart of the beautiful Javotte, so that neither the dread of the evils with which she was threatened, nor the hopes of good things promised, could touch her.

It was with great difficulty I had been allowed to speak to Javotte, otherwise I would have taken her out directly. I declared my intention to her, and she seemed to be highly pleased; but she told me it was impossible without first speaking to the Prioress. We agreed that I should return next day more early, and that if I found that

Lady, as I might probably expect, Javotte should directly be delivered from a slavery so contrary to my intentions.

I returned home in an extraordinary agitation, and found the Abbé eating his dinner with great tranquillity, imagining that I should not come till the evening. As this was a rule established between us, I ought not to have been angry, particularly as I had told him a hundred times that he must not wait for me. But I was in a bad humour, and I picked a quarrel with him upon his making so little ceremony, signifying that I would be Master in my own house, and that I thought it the duty of every one in it to wait for me. The Abbé being ignorant upon what account I spoke so sharply, answered me in the same tone, upon which a smart quarrel ensued, without his being able to discover the cause of my being offended. At length, my complaisance got the better of my resentment. I repented of having thus maltreated a man for whom I had till now so great a regard, and to whom I had given, in my house, as much authority as I had myself; and I was even tempted to believe him innocent. But I soon called to mind the story of poor Javotte, her miserable condition, her tears, and above all her beauty. All my indignation was again revived,
and

and transported me in such manner, as even to reproach the Abbé for the crime of which he was guilty. He was the more sensible, as my accusation was well-founded. However, the negative being the shortest of all answers, he made use of it, to avoid the trouble of a more ample justification. He had the assurance to make a crime of my failing in the respect due to him, and pushed me so vigorously, that I quite lost patience for the first time in all my life. I gave him to understand, very seriously, that he must without loss of time take proper measures to rid me of his company. He took me at my word, and went out directly to hire, as he told me, another lodging.

I had about two years before signed a contract of two thousand livres yearly to be paid him out of my whole estate. He had asked this security in case I should die before him, and perhaps without time to do any thing for him. I did not think I could refuse this satisfaction to a man whom I dearly loved, and who, for my sake, had given up a pretty good living. We had agreed verbally that this contract should be nothing between us. I always paid him his two hundred pistoles without taking receipts, and I had so little notion that this contract was binding on me, that I fell out with the Abbé without once thinking of it.

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At six in the evening I received a letter from the Abbé Ramy, in which he asked, politely enough, that I would be pleased to send, according to the direction which he mentioned, what might belong to him in the room that he had in my house. I was affected with the confidence he placed in me, and ordered all the furniture of his chamber to be taken down and sent to him, to which I added two services of plate, a porringer, a snuff-box (with a gold etui, which I had formerly given him) and to the value of about two thousand livres in books of devotion, which he had bought for me, and for which I had no farther use. Next morning, pretty early, a summons was brought me at the instance of the Abbé, by which he demanded, first, a sum of four thousand livres for two years arrears, due such a day, of the pension of two thousand livres granted by me to him by contract of such a date. Secondly, another sum of four thousand livres due to him for having done, at my house, the function of Chaplain from such a time. Thirdly, twelve thousand livres for three Nuns, whose Convent patrimonies he had paid, as by the discharges produced, saying, that it was money he had advanced me to do these pious works. It is true, I had been the instrument of making several poor girls Nuns, who had
vocation

vocation enough, but no money. But though the Abbé had paid, it was always with my money, and I had so much confidence in him that I had never thought of having the discharges made out in my name, nor even of asking him for them.

I wrote to him immediately, that his own conscience was sufficient to set aside his ridiculous pretensions; that I did not think I was obliged to pay him, since he did not remain with me till my death; that, however, as I knew him to be without a fortune, and if he did not behave amiss with me, I would give him the *Priory of D*****, worth about 2500 livres a year. This offer tempted the Abbé, and he not only desisted from his pretensions, but wrote me a letter upon his knees, in which he appeared to be deeply concerned that a misunderstanding had been the cause of our separation, and assured me that while he lived he would always acknowledge my favours. I never had been concerned in law-suits. I was satisfied with his submissions, and thought no more but of getting Javotte out of the Convent, as I had promised her.

Having waited for the Abbé Ramy's answer, I did not get to the Convent so soon as I expected. The Prioress was again gone out, which vexed me; I asked to see Javotte, but that favour was not to be granted; a new

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sister door-keeper was inflexible, and told me very devoutly, that Madam would by no means allow money to be received for such permissions. I was therefore obliged to be contented with a promise she made me to deliver a letter to Javotte, and another to the Prioress, both which I wrote directly, the sister furnishing me with paper, pen and ink. In my letter to Javotte I told her that business which could not be delayed had prevented my coming in time to see the Prioress, to whom I was now going to write, to engage her to wait for me next day. In my letter to the Prioress, I told her I had an opportunity of placing Javotte very much to her advantage; and that I begged to have the pleasure of conferring with her upon the project that I had formed. Having given the two letters to the sister, I went home, where I caused a Nomination to the Priory of D*** to be made out in due form in favour of the Abbé Ramy, which I sent him directly. He wrote me a very civil letter of thanks, with which I was so well pleased that I forgot what had passed.

I returned pretty early next morning to the Convent, where I found the Prioress waiting for me in her parloir. My natural vivacity did not permit me to conceal my discontent. I told her that the reason of my
taking

taking Javotte out of the Convent, was to deliver her from importunities of which she complained: at the same time, I reproached her with having drawn a great deal of money from me, without having employed it for that poor girl. The artful Lady defended herself very well, and began with offering me nine hundred livres of fifteen hundred which she had received. She told me that the Abbé Ramy had not thought proper to give Javotte what had been promised, because she was not sufficiently steady and fixed in the practice of Virtue, and that he thought it necessary to make her purchase the Superfluous at the expence of some little mortifications. It was then my passion rose high. I made the Lady Prioresse see, by my bitter reproaches, that I was not the dupe of this stratagem, and that something more than fine words was necessary to persuade me.

This good Lady told me so often that she was wholly ignorant of any criminal views the Abbé might have upon Javotte, that I yielded at last to her protestations, joined to the offer she made of delivering the money she had in her hands that moment. A behaviour so disinterested touched me, and I ought to say, to her praise, that I should have been much in the wrong to suspect her, since she was not otherwise culpable than I had been in placing too much confidence in the Abbé.

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She spoke to me in that dogmatical and absolute tone so natural to those who command, and embarrassed me not a little, by asking what I intended to do with Javotte, and where I resolved to place her. I was at a loss what to answer. I took it up upon a high cliff, and spoke as master. I said I was no longer in the humour of paying a pension to this girl, and that I had found a place where she would be kept gratis. The Prioress accepted the bargain, telling me she would rather take the charge of her upon herself alone, than suffer her to be made my Mistress. At this word I took fire: I asked her, if I had the reputation of a man capable of so base an action; I at last brought my devotion into plea: but this Lady knew better things, and told me very frankly, that I passed for a man who had formerly led a scandalous life, and whom Heaven had been pleased to reclaim; that a moment was sufficient to plunge me into the same gulph again. She was in the right; a moment had made me forget all my projects of retirement, and I was more in love with Javotte than I ever had been before with any of her sex. I had no other design but to make her happy, if she could be persuaded to make me so. I took care, however, to conceal my views from the Prioress; but my silence did not
blind

blind her, and she guessed at my thoughts without my speaking. It happens often that the more we endeavour to conceal a secret, the more it is discovered, particularly when we have to do with people who are acquainted with the human heart. In the mean time, I insisted on having Javotte out of the Convent directly; but the Prioress told me, that was absolutely impossible, because she was indisposed. I changed colour, she perceived it, and told me of it, and my confusion increased. But I recovered by her assuring me that her disorder was a slight defluxion, which did not in the least endanger her life, and only prevented going out. I asked to see her, but in that case there was a necessity of her getting out of bed, and the Prioress chose rather to promise to deliver her up to me in a few days, than to expose her now to perhaps a worse indisposition.

I was therefore obliged to return home alone. I sent every day to know how she did, and went often myself. I was always told she was in bed. I was afraid that they concealed her malady from me, for which reason I sent my Physician to visit her, fully persuaded that they would not refuse to let him see her; but I was deceived. He was not more favoured than I, being told that the house had a very able Physician, and who
had

had capacity enough to cure Javotte. Thus I lived for fifteen days in great uneasiness, amusing myself with the preparation of an apartment for Javotte, and filling it with every thing she could wish for.

I received one morning a letter from the Abbé Ramy, who wrote that he had been to take possession of his living, that he should think himself eternally obliged to me, and would have come to thank me personally but that he durst not presume to appear in my presence. I desired the bearer to tell him that I was glad the affair was ended ; and this was all the answer I made to this letter. Javotte took up my whole thoughts, and I went almost daily to her convent, believing every time that I should bring her along with me ; without being able to accomplish my design. I had a laquais, a very artful fellow, who observing my trouble took it in his head to offer me his assistance, and to promise me that I should be satisfied with his management. I accepted his proposal. He asked me eight days, without telling me where he would go : I granted his demands. He dressed himself as an Ecclesiastic, and thus disguised went to the convent and desired to speak to Javotte ; but that being refused, he demanded an audience of the Lady Priorefs, to which he was admitted. He told her that he came at the desire

fire of the Abbé Ramy, and that he had something of importance to communicate to Javotte. The Prioress, out of regard to the Ecclesiastical habit, ordered that Javotte should appear directly, but thought proper to be present herself at the conversation. The feigned Abbé began, by way of prelude, to branch out piety in the different duties of it, and pretty much to the purpose; he next spoke of the passion of his pretended friend, whom he greatly blamed, but said that he was now very sorry for his fault. The Prioress, prepossessed with the edifying air which he affected, and with the manner of his discoursing, scarce listened any more to what he said, but walked too and again in the parlour. He took the advantage of a moment, when her face was turned from him, to slip a little billet into Javotte's hand, which contained only the following words.

Do not appear to be surprised, if a person presents himself as your father whom you do not know: that name must be made use of to get you out of this place, since they refuse to deliver you to Monsieur de Versorand. Burn this billet, and keep your mind to yourself.

So soon as he was certain that the Prioress had not seen what he had done, he added that the Abbé Ramy had sent him to ask pardon of Javotte for the injurious discourses his passion

sion had dictated, and to engage her to remember him in her prayers ; and then retired, leaving the young girl very much surpris'd, and the Prioress very much edified with the piety of this worthy clergyman.

Two days after he sent to the convent an old man of sixty, whom he had fully instructed. He asked for the Prioress and told her that his name was such, coachman to such a one, and father of a girl named Javotte, whom they detained prisoner in the convent without his permission, and that he insisted on having her restored to him directly. The Lady wanted to argue with him, but he began to swear with so good a grace, that she judg'd, by his outrageousness, he was capable of any extremity, and, that all things considered, it was even best to let him have his daughter. She ask'd him however a certificate, by which it might appear that she had restored her to himself in quality of father. He desired her to write what she thought proper, and he signed the name of Javotte's father, and brought the fair one, in an hour after, to my house. I was extremely surpris'd, but so charmed to see her, that I scarce inform'd myself in what manner she had got out of the convent. My laquais took care to inform me : I laugh'd heartily at his scheme, and gave him a reward proportionable to the service

service which he had rendered me. I conducted the Belle into the apartment that had been fitted up for her, and left her alone with a chamber-maid I had hired to attend her, who, half with her will, half against it, forced her to throw off her old tattered apparel, and put on a genteel gay dishabille; and this done she came down to my apartment. How beautiful did she appear to me! She was quite different from herself; the borrowed air which her new dress gave her, added still to her charms; modesty and candour shone in her countenance; every thing in her spoke innocence, and invited me to rob her of it. She thanked me for the services I had rendered her, and begged that I would give her cloaths more suitable to her condition, intimating that she was not born to wear things so magnificent. Her simplicity ravished me. I told her it was all for her, that she must make use of them, and that, if fineries pleased her, she should still have a great deal more. I dined *tête à tête* with her, and after dinner she recounted all the displeasures she had met with in the convent, and joined to her own story that of the Lady Prioress, which a boarder had learned more than fifteen years ago, and it had been handed down by tradition to all those who had since come into the community.

This

The Lady was daughter to a mean citizen of Paris. A man very rich had made of her what I intended to make of Javotte. After having kept constant to her for some years, he had abandoned her for an opera girl less beautiful, and yet more amiable. The loss of her lover having disgusted her with the world, she threw herself into this convent, where the same man had paid her patrimony; and by the credit of some of his friends, to whom he had recommended her, had got her preferred to be Prioress. I remarked that Javotte had no dissimulation, and but very little wit, which gave me great pleasure; I founded my happiness upon her simplicity, and thought I should be exempted from the disagreeable scenes I had gone through with women of better understandings. We supped together, after which I permitted her to retire to her chamber. I had resolved to assist at her undressing, without her knowledge, and with that view went up a little after her and slipped into a wardrobe, where behind a glass door covered with a thin gauze, I had the pleasure of observing how greatly she was surprized with the magnificence of every thing about her. Nothing ever was more comical than the ceremonies she used, and the discourse she held with her waiting-maid. I admired how strongly the idea of what we are, possess

possesses us. Javotte, born in a condition to esteem herself very happy in the honour of serving a Lady at her toilette, could not bear the thoughts of being attended by another at hers. She made so many compliments to her waiting-maid, that I could scarce forbear laughing aloud. But the most diverting part of the whole scene was her going to bed. I had caused a bed to be fitted up for her, which had belonged to the late Madam Dange-mone. The stuff was a blue damask, trimmed with silver lace and tassels. Javotte examined it with great attention, but the more she admired its richness and beauty, the more she was obstinate not to lie in it, and I more than once thought I should have been obliged to shew myself to end the dispute, by telling her it was my intention she should make use of it; but luckily the waiting-maid prevailed with her to go to bed, and I retired without noise. The next morning as I was going up to visit my Belle, word was brought that an honest attorney wanted to speak with me. I ordered him to be admitted. He told me he was the Abbé Ramy's lawyer, that he was surpris'd a man of my fortune should suffer his name to be mentioned in a court of justice, that he had formerly summoned me for the payment of four thousand livres due to his client, and that it would be more adviseable

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viseable for me to make payment than to multiply expences, which would rise high, by contending ; and that all my estates would be directly seized, if I did not take care to prevent it. I told him the whole story very naturally, and added, that in giving him the priory, my view was to procure subsistence to the Abbé, who could have no title, I thought, to the rent of two hundred pistoles. He could not help acknowledging that the Abbé was a man of bad principles ; and said he was sorry I had been used so ill, but advised me to pay. I point-blank refused, and defied him to force me. I resolved to entertain Javotte with this piece of news, and I found her still in bed, where her waiting-maid had designedly amused her, that I might have the pleasure of seeing her in that situation. The first step I made was to embrace her ; she made a vigorous resistance, nevertheless I carried that point, and in order to punish her for her shyness, I wanted to kiss her lovely bosom, which was quite uncovered, and how delicious the prospect ! She got out of my hands, jumped out of bed quite naked, and ran about the room seeking a place to hide herself in, upbraiding me with the most injurious language. In short, almost furious to see herself naked, and not knowing where to retire, she opened a window calling out

as loudly as she could for assistance. I flew to her, shut the window, and endeavoured as much as I could to dissipate her fears. I left the room directly that my presence might not irritate her. It must be owned that I never was better pleased; the idea of touching the heart of this beautiful damsel, and triumphing over rigid virtue, for the first time in my life, was charming. I gave her time to grow calm, and for some days kept out of her sight, that I might not offer to her view the object of her indignation; I reckoned she would be weary of being so lonesome, but I was deceived. She was delighted with my absence, and rejoiced on being exempted from the necessity of seeing a man who wanted to surprise her at a disadvantage. Not (said she to her waiting-maid) but that those who can pretend to marriage, may hear men who make their addresses in an honourable way; but when there is no appearance that their designs can be other than criminal, a girl must shut her ears to all their discourse, and look upon them as her greatest enemies. Monsieur de Verforand, added she, is one of those who are to be avoided; he is a man of rank, and only seeks to destroy the innocence of such a girl as me. You are much deceived, replied the artful maid my good friend. I know

know that Monsieur thinks you as beautiful as the Angels, that he admires your Virtue, your graces, and your simplicity. He is extremely rich, and absolutely at his own disposal; why will you refuse your own happiness? Why would you persuade yourself that he wants only to seduce you? You deserve that he should make your fortune, he knows that you are worthy of it, and I make no doubt but these are his views. Far from shunning him, or of giving him a bad reception, as you have done, you must pay him great deference, desire to see him, and if possible augment, by a complaisant behaviour, his present favourable opinion of you. Believe me, my dear Javotte, I know him better than you, there is not a man of more honour in the world. It was thus she endeavoured to bring Javotte to my purpose, who remained however inflexible, and could not even determine herself to have word sent me to come and see her. But this ensnaring conversation made her look upon her maid as a real friend, and intirely in her interest. This girl, as had been concerted betwixt her and me, feigned an indisposition for near a month. I went every day to enquire how she did, and this gave me an opportunity of seeing every day the beautiful Javotte, who loved her to that degree that she

was

was not a minute absent from her. I was exactly informed of all that passed in their conversations about me. I spoke of love to Javotte, but in the most honourable and respectful manner. I constantly told her that I should esteem myself the happiest of men, if I could procure her consent to our marriage, and I repeated this so often that she, in good earnest, believed I had no other design. I gave her music and dancing masters. All these people spoke to her of the world, but she commanded their silence, obliging them to confine their discourse to the lessons they were to give her, and the moment that was over, dismissed them with more vivacity than politeness.

In the mean time my process was advancing, and the Abbé had taken care to lay arrests wherever he thought I had any thing to receive. I then opened my eyes, and went to ask advice of my notary, who gave me an Attorney, and this is what we may call knocking a man in the head to save his life. This Attorney finding me a down-right novice in law-affairs, thought proper to take the advantage of my ignorance, a quality very amiable, the Lawyers think, particularly in a man who is rich. I recounted, from beginning to end, all my transactions with the Abbé, without forgetting my having given him

him the Priory of 2500 livres to relieve him from indigence, and to prevent his rogueries. My Attorney, a good sort of a man, but not over intelligent, being extravagantly fond of ample writings, had the imprudence to insert every word of the explication I had given, in a memorial by way of petition, which he presented for me. This occasioned a new process. I was accused and convicted of Simony; and thus was obliged to defend myself against a crime of which I scarce knew the name. At the same time my affair with the Abbé, which was so simple, became doubtful, to say no more; because it is the custom in the courts to think, that whoever transgresses on one occasion, is guilty in all others that may happen; and to charge with a thousand faults the person who has committed one. This principle, absurd as it is, has gained favour, and supports itself to the shame of Reason and the ruin of many private Persons. In effect, was there any thing so extravagant as the discourses which were held every where upon my unhappy affair. I was the dupe of a man who had imposed upon my credulity, and abused my confidence in the most affecting and grievous manner. It was almost impossible for me to elude the payment of the rent. The contract was in due form, and nothing but a confession on the

the part of the Abbé could vacate it. It was quite natural to give me notice by a summons, and I should not have been averse from pronouncing my own condemnation.

An Attorney made me at first hope, that a judgment would set aside the contract. Was it possible not to be caught with such a bait? twenty-four thousand livres are no trifling object, even to the richest private man. Afterwards, Advocates, gentlemen of great politeness and importance, gave me, for ready gold, advice more eloquent than solid, which augmented my confidence, and made me plunge myself deeper in the gulph of Chicanery. In fine, judges of integrity and knowledge received me well, promised me prompt dispatch, with compliments on my future success; and yet writings were heaped upon writings, and my affair was embroiled on pretence of being cleared up. My estate was seized, which reduced me to the onerous expedient of borrowing; and in short, to my present load of distress I had the melancholy prospect of an uncertain judgment to add.

Such was my condition, and the pleasure alone of seeing Javotte could soften my sufferings; but, what do I say? her virtue gave me new displeasures, every time I attempted any freedoms with her. In short, she pushed her ferocity so far, as to refuse me the inno-

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cent pleasure of procuring her the education due to her beauty and fine natural parts. She dismissed all the masters whom I had given her, and told me, very plainly, that she would never see them more. I employed, to no purpose, the most pressing solicitations to engage her to continue her lessons, in which she advanced greatly, without intending it. I adored her; of what is not such a lover capable? I carried my flattery so far as to make her understand that she must form herself, and be in a condition to appear in the world, before I married her; which was not however my intention; but if such treacheries are not allowable in love, 'tis very certain they are in use. Consider, said I to her, that to live in the world, you must be as others in it; that you can never dispense with knowing as much as the women with whom you converse, without exposing yourself to criticism in proportion to your want of knowledge. How does a passionate lover suffer in seeing the object of his desires exposed to little mortifications? Javotte was still Javotte; that is to say, inflexible, and a year passed without our being on better terms of friendship, though we knew one another much better. One day that she appeared to be in a tolerable good humour, and by her cheerfulness made me easier than usual, I
ventured

ventured to bring music and dancing again upon the carpet. She heard me with calmness enough, and thereafter told me there was one method of engaging her to learn all that I thought necessary. I asked her with that earnestness which the desire of seeing a woman's charms augmented whom we love, inspires, what it was. It is, said she, that you will be so good to place me in a convent as a boarder; if you consent to this, Sir, I shall believe that you intend to marry me, and shall endeavour to deserve your goodness by all the attentions of which I am capable. You may send there all the masters in Paris. I will learn every thing, and promise you that from morning to night I shall be constantly employed in taking lessons: nothing will chagrine me. I shall be safe in a convent, and, which is more, decently in it; an advantage that I have not at your house, and of which you can no longer deprive me, if you have any esteem for me.

After this proposal Javotte left me, with an intention, no doubt to give me time to reflect, and come to a resolution. But she knew not love. Was it likely that I should consent to be separated from her? I had an incredible pleasure in beholding her, and found that she was absolutely necessary to my happiness. As this was the case, I did not hesitate a moment on what I was to do: It

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was decided that Javotte should remain with me, and that I should leave nothing unattempted to gain my ends. I had a secret interview with her waiting-maid, who was an intelligent girl, if ever there was any. I ordered her to study the taste of the lovely Javotte, and to inform me exactly of every thing that could flatter her. That study is already made, Sir, answered she. This little creature is, if I may so speak, a downright demon for virtue. She has little or no wit, she abhors reading, and particularly the amusing books you have given her. The serious Romances tire her, the ludicrous she despises as foolish; criticism displeases her, tragedy afflicts her, voluptuous writings are her detestation. *La Paysanne parvenue* * alone hits her Ladyship's taste, from a conformity, no doubt, of Janette's adventures with her own. For a month past I lulled her asleep with this book, and we are now almost at the end of one volume.

I was greatly concerned to see Javotte had so little disposition for a state to which she was called by her birth, her beauty, and my love. I began to think I should never be able to reduce her, and that the wisest course was to abandon her. But Virtue is respected

■ *The Fortunate Country-Maid.*

even.

even by its enemies. I could not resolve to punish Javotte so cruelly; on the contrary I determined to do her good. How to accomplish it was the question, since I did not intend to marry her? I thought of several ways to oblige her, and was just upon the point of consulting her own inclination, when a thought came into my head that she loved me, and waited till I should force her to make me happy. I said to myself upon this head, all that occurs to an amorous rake in his soliloquies: I looked upon her resistance as the effect of prejudices flowing from a vulgar education, and I conceived the monstrous project of carrying off, by force, the fruit of a virtue the more to be respected, as it had unassisted withstood dangerous opportunities, pressing solicitations, artful discourses, important services, since they were necessary ones, and, in fine, inclination, which I pretended she had for me.

In order to be well with her, I began by telling her, that I consented to her being a boarder in a convent which she should chuse herself. I never saw a girl better pleased. She was then in my apartment, but some body coming, she went up to her own chamber, and for the first time appeared to be vexed that she was obliged to leave me.

In the evening I went to sup with her in her own apartment. Her eyes sparkled with that lively joy which the pleasure of obtaining what one has long desired, gives. Our conversation was easy and diverting enough. I discoursed of my love sometimes at a distance, and sometimes in terms more close and precise. I covered my passion with a veil so decent, that a girl of a better conception than Javotte, would have had difficulty enough to have penetrated into my views. After supper I remained, on pretence of settling in what manner she was to live in the convent. I told her that I must be deeply smitten to consent to every thing that she inclined. She thanked me modestly. I fancied that she was somewhat animated, which made me speak of my passion in a more pressing manner. I employed, to engage her to make me happy, the most tender and lively sollicitations, the most flattering promises, and the most striking marks of despair; she trembled, but was otherwise unmoved. In the mean time my passion rose higher and higher, her resistance rendered me furious, and I made, in order to triumph, efforts proportioned to my desires. She defended herself with equal ardour and more strength. Her shrieks were useless, her waiting-maid alone could succour her, and I was sure she would do nothing.

nothing. When Javotte saw herself betrayed by that very girl, in whom she had entirely confided, she was mad with anger, and became quite outrageous. The combat was long, and supported on both sides with an astonishing vigour. But at length she remained mistress of the field of battle, and I was forced to leave her chamber, carrying nothing with me, as the fruit of all my fatigue and labour, but the shame of being vanquished, and a good number of scratches.

I went to bed in great wrath against Javotte, and was under too violent an agitation to be able to sleep. I amused myself with finding out a method to get rid of this modern Lucretia, in such a manner, that in punishing her I should abandon her to her unhappy fate, without her even finding any assistance from her parents. But my fury vanished, Reason came to enlighten me, and I soon felt that I alone was guilty. What has she done to me, said I to myself? She is chaste; chastity is all she has, and she will preserve it. Am I so unreasonable to charge her with it as a crime? No. If I am not so happy to be virtuous myself, I at least know how to respect it in others. I will befriend Javotte; she is more beautiful than Hortensia, and more deserving of my benefactions. Sleep at last seized me, but did

not change my ideas. Next morning when I awaked, I sent for Javotte's waiting-maid to come and speak to me. I ordered her to tell her mistress, that she was at liberty to go, when she thought proper, to the convent D**** where I would pay her pension, what she should agree for; that I begged she would excuse the insult I had been guilty of, and that I would make such reparation as would induce her to forget it. My offers were accepted, Javotte went out two hours after to go and chuse her lodging at the convent; but she forgot to return. I fancied she was apprehensive that I might change my mind, and for that reason remained in the convent. I sent to it, they had not seen her; I went myself; the mother Prioress assured me, with such an air of sincerity, that she knew not what I meant, that I was forced to believe her. Thus lost I this beautiful girl, at a time when I began to esteem her, and consequently to deserve her confidence, which she had, with so great justice, refused me some time before.

The same week my process with the Abbé Ramy was judged, entirely to my disadvantage. I appealed from the sentence, and was made to hope for better success in a higher court. I thought that a process of so long duration could not miss of being sufficiently instructed,

instructed, and that the pretensions of the parties having been contested for above a year, the Judges had only to view and pronounce. All that had been done was absolutely useless. They began anew, as if nothing had been done, with this difference, that the new revision was more dilatory, and consequently more expensive.

Six months passed before it was decided who were to be my Judges; at length I fell to the lot of a chamber less expeditious than numerous. The only material point now, as I was told, depended on procuring the interest of a certain Monsieur Futil, a sort of half Robe-man, half Financer; a man well known in all the courts, and who acted, in the grand manner, what they term Solicitor of Processes: This was his folly.

He was a young man agreeable enough as to his person. He was born to be extravagant, and whether he had felt this vocation, or not, he had consecrated himself to the Serious, and acted it so wretchedly that his ridicules gave diversion. Vast in his projects, heedless in his conduct, arrogant in success, and cringing in adversity; he pretended to know every thing, except his own mistakes, which he never would acknowledge: more prodigal than generous, more covetous than œconomist; he ruined himself by endeavour-

ing to grow rich. Law, building, finances, politics, and even the polite arts, could scarce set bounds to his vast insufficiency. Under the shade of a mistaken air of wisdom, and of birth, the more brilliant as it was quite recent, he fancied himself beloved by those who laughed at him, and esteemed by those whom he greatly fatigued with his company.

His wife, young and handsome, had so often heard that she held in the world a considerable rank, that she very sincerely believed it. A man of quality had confirmed her in this idea, by making his court to her. But he had lately thrown her off in so ungentle a manner, that he had given her a disgust to first rate quality. Things were in this situation when I was introduced to her by a person who was my friend, as well as hers. Two days after, perceiving that none of her husband's ridicules escaped her, I concluded her to be a woman of sense and taste, and took it into my head to make a conquest of her; in which I found difficulties.

Nothing disposes a woman less to engage in a second intrigue, than the bad success of a former. Nevertheless, she considered that I was fitter for her purpose than her first lover, because I was not a man of quality. This reflection was of advantage to me; I perceived

ceived it, and lost no time. The moment she had promised to love me, I took it for granted that she actually then loved me, and I pressed her to make me happy. She stood upon the defensive for some time in a very decent and very resolute manner. In fine, she confessed one day, that with the greatest good-will in the world, it was not in her power to do any thing for me, as she could not give me one private moment at her own house. In reality, with robe-men we seldom find that liberty which reigns among people in high life. The man of quality has his mistress, and does not take amiss that his wife has her lover. He only sees her at table, in the play-houses, or at assemblies, where they meet by chance. If he goes sometimes to her apartment, it is a serious visit he pays her, which is notified, at least, the day before, that she may be prepared to receive him. My Lady, on her part, acts with the same circumspection. Thus the happiness of life depends upon a right understanding, and making the proper, as well as timely disposition.

I had no little private house of retreat, and there was no way of bringing a Lady so well known as Madam Futil to my house, whose visit might have been of very bad consequence to my law affairs. I racked my brains.

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to find out an expedient, and was at last determined to ask the use of a friend's little pleasure house, when one morning I received the following advertisement sealed.

*This is to give notice, that Madam Després has made choice in ***** street of a house very commodious for rendezvous. People may come in and go out without being seen, and are furnished with all sorts of refreshments at reasonable prices.*

This discovery pleased me, because I wanted such a place. I went the very same day to this obliging Lady's house, and found, with pleasure, that there was no imposition in her bill. The house stood opposite to a high wall, which put a bar to the curiosity of neighbours. It was distributed into little chambers genteely furnished, and in a manner suitable to the institution. A bed and two chairs occupied the half of every chamber, a toilette and a chimney furnished the other half. In the lower end was a garde-robe, ornamented as that of a blooming young Abbess. All the rooms were in a corridor, or gallery, pretty like that of a convent, and all numbered. At the side of every door there was a turning machine, by means whereof servant-maids, very intelligent, served their guests with dinner or supper, if they thought proper. When any person inclined to go out
of

of any of these cells, he was obliged to ring a bell, upon which, a maid who came to know his commands went and rung a great bell that was heard all over the house, and this was the signal for every one to keep in close quarters. The same formalities were observed on the arrival of new guests, and thus people could go in and come out without being seen by one another, though there was a continual flux and reflux in this palace of pleasure.

I left it highly delighted with what I had seen. I went to sup at Madam Futil's, to whom I recounted all the particulars of my new discovery. She had no time to make me any answer, but it was sufficient to me that she understood me.

Next morning her husband wrote me, that, if I was going to the Opera, he begged I would take his wife along with me, her horses being out of order, and that he should be obliged to me for this favour. I understood the affair much better than he. I answered that I would not fail to wait upon his Lady, and accordingly went to her house at four o'clock. I found her in top dress, and beautiful as an Angel. We said there would, no doubt, be a great deal of company at the opera, and that we ought to be there early, that we might find places. We drove to
Madam

Madam Després's, who received us very graciously. I made my coach wait in the street with Madam Futil's footman and mine; and was under some uneasiness lest they should discover at whose house we were: I spoke of it to Madam Després, who assured me that her porter (for she had one) was as much to be depended upon as herself; and, that I might be perfectly easy upon that head, she owned that her porter was her husband, and that she did not think she could safely trust any other with a post of such importance.

After the signal of the great bell was given, we were conducted to the second floor, where we were shut up in a chamber like those which I had seen the day before on the first floor. The little Lady Futil seemed charmed to find herself thus in liberty. I wanted to take advantage of this critical minute, but she stopped me very seriously. More voluptuous than tender, she intended that nothing should be wanting to my pleasures. She went to the toilette, where she threw off all her superfluous and even necessary ornaments; so that in a moment she was in my arms almost naked. I gave myself up to the transports of pleasure with which this sight inspired me, and they were the more lively, that my late long fit of devotion had made me lose the relish as well as the practice. I perceived

perceived that Madam Futil had for gallantry qualities much above her condition, and I made my advantage of them so happily, that she found in me more charms than I discovered in her.

The time of an opera is often tedious. All depends upon the manner of employing it. It was already eight o'clock, and we had no thoughts of going. But night that came stealing upon us, made us think of a retreat. Two wax candles were brought and conveyed to us by the means of the turning conveniency. The Lady sat down to her toilette, and dressed herself with great deliberation. In fine, we left this delicious place, promising Madam Després to see her again in a short time. We were too much charmed with one another to think of what we were to say about the opera. Our whole occupation, in our way home, was reiterated promises of mutual love, and mutual proofs of tenderness, not such as we could have wished, but such as the situation of two lovers (placed opposite to one another in a coach that drove very fast, and in which every motion was observable by the light of flambeaux) could permit.

Futil had made a great many visits that day, and not finding himself well in any one place, which was generally the case, had gone

gone in quest of us to the opera. He was not only surpris'd not to find us there, but had the impudence to tell us so before a company bad enough, but very numerous. In any other place I should have perhaps been embarrassed, but there impudence was my refuge. I told him that on leaving his house we had paid two visits to friends of his wife, and thereafter we had gone to the opera where we could find no place. Morbleu, cried he, interrupting me, that cannot be; for there was scarce a soul in the house. Very well, Sir, answered I, we must, since it is so, confess, that being very indifferent about the opera, we chose rather to take the advantage of the fine day for an airing in the wood of Boulogne with Madam Vilmane. I there nam'd a woman of his acquaintance who pass'd her whole time, in a manner, with Madam Futil, and could give her friend a caveat in case of explication. At the very instant pops in the identical Madam de Vilmane, who ask'd us all with an affectation and ceremony that made me almost crazy, how we did. Then she began a raving at Authors and Players, adding, that she was just come from seeing a wretched Tragedy. This is odious, said she. What, must we then hire boxes for the privilege of being tired to death with a dull piece, and,
for

for decency's sake, obliged not to stir till the clock strikes nine? I protest I will go no more but to good plays. It is true, I shall find no body there. Well, we sit more at our ease, come out content, and without being crowded. Afterwards she fell to anatomising the Tragedy in question, in a manner very instructive, and quite different from an ordinary woman; but none of us were in a situation to give much heed, or bestow any encomiums upon her dissertation; it was therefore dropt, as well as the piece which had given rise to it. Futil asked his wife very seriously, if it was absolutely impossible, that he should be informed where she had been. She was under some confusion, but extricated herself by assuming an haughty air. She answered, that he should know it at a proper time. This was said with an air of mystery and disdain that surprised me. The obstinate husband was not otherwise satisfied with the answer, but he was in the habit of holding his peace with those who spoke louder than he; not a word more came out of his mouth, and we sat down to table. The whole company observed Madam Futil and me with the most malicious compassion. A very honest man, who was there by chance, whispered in Madam de Vilmane's ear the subject of the husband's bad humour. This artful

artful woman received the advice with an air of indifference. A moment after she spoke of some known persons whom she had found in the Wood of Boulogne. What do you mean, Madam, cried Futil, you say you was at the French house? Yes, the day before yesterday, answered she; and in my life I never was so much tired: I wanted to revenge myself on the piece, and you will allow, I hope, that I have acquitted myself tolerably well. If I told you that I was just come from the play, it was to render the thing more affecting. I thought you knew that your Lady and I, with Monsieur de Verforand, had been at the Wood of Boulogne. By my faith, I knew nothing of the matter (replied Futil, who greedily swallowed the bait) you have made there a very disagreeable *qui pro quo*, and I was angry with Madam Futil and Monsieur de Verforand. The mysterious air with which they spoke, gave me umbrage, and you are all three to blame. Learn from me that such matters are not to be jested with; this is my advice. Agreed, said Madam de Vilmane, but if it be not allowed to jest, it is less so to be angry. The affirmative tone does not become a husband in such a case, otherwise he deserves all that he seems to suspect. Believe me, Sir, it is often dangerous

dangerous to give a wife occasion to make reflections, and there is that man who would not have been deceived, but because he was afraid of being so. You are in the right, Madam, replied a Counsellor; your moral is good, we feel the solidity of it, but we want the power to put it in practice. A large field for reflections was here opened, and every one was preparing to give his opinion, when a young and pretty woman put a stop to our career, by a song very modish, and sung prettily enough. She had her reasons for preventing the husbands, who were present, from making too many reflections, hers was seated at my side, and her lover at hers. Her voice was agreeable, and supported by a little method and taste. Every one was charmed to hear her, and particularly those who had been obliged to bear a part in the conversation. Monsieur Futil loved the table, and if eating a great deal, and drinking no less, may be called shining, he was in reality among the brightest. The music enlivened him, he made us all sing, and in the mean time drank so large a quantity of different liquors, with a design to drown grief, that he was soon incapable to think of it. In fine, we parted about three in the morning. I went to bed, the moment I got home, very well satisfied with
my

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my day's work. I passed a part of the night congratulating myself upon my good fortune, and endeavouring to persuade myself that I should love my Mistress so long as I lived. This is precisely what suits me, said I to myself; she is young, lovely, and tolerably witty. Her husband is a weak man, who will never disturb me. I have found a treasure. I am no longer young, I ought to be no longer foolish. The wisest course I can take is to have done with adventures, and to confine myself within the *bourgeois* circle, which I shall find at Futil's. I shall begin with laughing at the ridicules which I observe there, by degrees I shall accustom myself to them, and in the end give into them as well as others, without perceiving that I do so. I fell asleep upon this magnificent plan. When I awaked next morning, I was told that Monsieur Futil had been waiting above an hour in my anti-chamber. I ordered that he should be brought in, and received him in bed. He approached me with the most affable air, and made me, in delicate and well-chosen terms, the most polite excuses. I heard him patiently without interruption, and thereafter asked him very calmly to explain himself. Judging by my cold air that I was very much irritated against him; he redoubled his civilities. In short, I at last discovered

discovered that all the pompous galimatias of his elaborate speech terminated in his begging I would not be offended at his suspecting me of being capable of acting in concert with his wife to deceive him. I did all I could to dissipate his fears, and as a proof that I loved him, promised to sup with him again that very evening. He embraced me, and we parted the best friends in the world.

For near a month I was from morning to night in that house, where I was so heartily wearied that I was at last obliged to confess it to Madam Futil, endeavouring to soften this impertinence in the most polite manner I could. I told her that I had been always accustomed to live with people of quality, that in her house, I was as it were in a new world, of which I neither knew the manners nor how I should behave. I concluded with begging that she would not take it amiss in me if I had a little communication with my old friends, without renouncing the pleasure of accompanying her often to Madam Després's, to whom we had always continued to render frequent visits. She understood my drift, but dissembled. She only said she was sorry her merit was not sufficient to engross me wholly to herself, and if I were much in love with her, I would be blind to every body in her house but herself. I do not
know

know well what answer I should have made to this, but somebody came in, which, happily for me, interrupted our conversation.

Fifteen days thereafter, she told me there was an absolutely necessity of my coming oftener to her house; that my process was ready to be judged, and that it was of great consequence to me to have the good-will of my Judges. I believed her, and had reason to be thankful. In three different days I saw all those who were to decide my affair. They were extremely civil upon Monsieur Futil's account, with whom they saw I was very intimate. Every one of them made me hope for the most advantageous success, and I was pretty well assured that they not only spoke sincerely, but that they were likewise very fond of me. I was charmed with this discovery, and to make them still more favourable, gave them several entertainments, sometimes to the whole collective body, and sometimes to particular members, but always in a magnificent manner. One day, I picked out six of the youngest, and made them sup with an equal number of the prettiest girls in Paris. Another day, I invited the old Dons, and gave them a more exquisite supper, but suppressed the article of women, more troublesome than agreeable to gray hairs. When the conversation be-
came

came a little lively and brisk, I judged by their discourse, that the remembrance of past pleasures diverted them much, and that they still endeavoured to realise those agreeable ideas. Some days after, I furnished them with a fair opportunity.

With a view to this, I prevailed with M. Futil to permit his wife, for once, to do the honours of my house: he consented. At the desire of this Lady, I had a great many others very beautiful; who amused these grave Judges to admiration. The supper was delicious, and of long duration. Upon leaving the table the seniors were for retiring, but in vain; the young men hurried them into a Saloon prepared for the ball. Some friends, whom I had invited, waited for us, all disguised. I had caused to bring some Domino's; whoever pleased took them, and had the pleasure of not being known at least for some minutes. For it was not possible to remain long *incognito* in an assembly of at most sixty persons, who knew one another. At six in the morning, one of them tired and sleepy, touched his repeating watch, which gave the alarm, and made the others file off the best way they could. Our Judges took a nap for a couple of hours, and then appeared on the bench. Wo to the poor pleaders who fell into their hands that day, and whose just
claims

claims required a full hearing. They were all asleep on the bench. Men are not made of iron, there is a necessity of sleeping somewhere.

Three days after my process was judged, and I gained it with one voice. The sentence that had been obtained against me was reversed in all its parts; the Plaintiff declared ill-founded in all his demands, and condemned to costs: in short, the contract of which he was in possession, declared null. The poor Abbé was like a man risen from the dead with this thundering Arret: he sent me the contract in a letter, in which he appeared as humble as he had been haughty. I was affected with his disaster; forgave him my expenses, and sent him a hundred louis to pay his own; thus concluded this unhappy affair.

The same day Monsieur Futil, fatigued with several parties he had made the preceding days, dined amply and went to bed. His wife sent me word to wait for her! she came to my gate about a quarter of an hour after, and we drove straight to Madam Després's, where we celebrated, in a most agreeable manner, my triumph in the country of Chicane.

Little accustomed to pass a day in bed, Futil could not sleep, he got up, dressed, and went to visit a beautiful widow, involved in law, whom he protected, and with whom
he

he was almost as well as I was with his wife, excepting the conveniencies. This fair Lady had a mother in the house with her, who acted the part of a jealous husband, and whose vigilant care was the only obstacle to her lover's happiness. I do not know by what chance this lovely widow had discovered the habitation of Madam Després, and had been informed how graciously people were received in that house. She regaled her lover with this discovery upon his coming in; the mother was gone out; Futil, whom opportunity rendered more pressing, solicited so warmly that he prevailed with the Belle to let herself be conducted to this temple of undisturbed pleasure. They arrived at the door in a hackney, as we were getting into Madam Futil's coach. Her husband, who did not chuse to be seen, kept snug in his vehicle. He saw us, at a distance, coming out of the house, and getting into the coach without knowing as yet who we were, but when he came up to the place where the coach stopped, he perfectly knew his own livery and his wife's berlin, as well as us who were in it, without our having the least suspicion of his being so near us, because there was no servant but the Widow's behind the hackney. How great was his astonishment when she made him go into the

very same house from whence he had seen us come out. Is it here, said he to her, with an air of consternation? Yes, Sir, answered his Belle without ceremony. He was so much master of his choler to allow himself, without opening his mouth, to be conducted into a hall, where it was the custom to wait for the mistress of the house, and where he waited with all the rage and fury possible. At last she appeared. Madam, said he, with a tone capable to frighten one of less courage, do you know the Gentleman and Lady who just now left this house?

It but little regards you, Sir, answered Madam Després very calmly; I know whom I receive, but I do not think it is proper to let you into such secrets. Morbleu, Madam, cried he, it is . . . it is . . . Morbleu, I will be even with you . . . it is my cursed wife, understand you me now, and Very well, Sir, answered the intriguing Dame, you have in hand so fair an opportunity of revenge, of what do you complain? Come, get up stairs, and make no noise. Saying this, she conducted him to one of Venus's cells, where she locked him in with the beautiful Widow, whose tender complaisance made him soon forget all his misfortunes.

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In the mean time, I had returned with Madam Futil to her house, where I intended to wait for her husband, to return him thanks for the services he had rendered me in my law-suit. This Lady and I were amusing ourselves with a party at piquet *tête à tête*, when word was brought that a Lady in a hackney-coach wanted to speak with me. This visit surprised me; I went down, and whom should I find but Mrs. Després, who, in two words, told me what had happened at her house. I was thunder-struck. She told me, by way of palliative, that if I could gain Madam Futil's coachman and two laquais, the fact might be denied; but that there was not a moment to be lost. I thanked her, promising to let her know what should happen, and then went into the house. I was at a loss, whether I should communicate this misfortune to the Lady, before I spoke to her people, and so undetermined what to do, that I was got into her chamber before I could come to any resolution. She soon perceived something very cloudy in my countenance, and trembling to see me in so great disorder, Ah! Versorand, said she, embracing me, what is the matter? I conjure you to tell me. Her lively concern greatly affected me. I told her the story, which made her shake; but in a moment she

was determined. Let us follow the advice of this woman, said she, and get you gone. Let Madam de Vilmane know what has happened, that obliging friend hath once already brought us out of a scrape; desire her to come here to supper, and leave the rest to me.

I went directly out on foot, got into the first hackney I met with, and drove to Madam de Vilmane's, but she was gone out. When I asked if they could inform me where she was, the porter mentioned three or four houses in the four corners of Paris. I went the round, and at length found her in the last, about half an hour after nine; just as they were going to sit down to table. The company was surprised to see me, and I was invited to supper. I do not know if I made any tolerable excuse so great was my confusion. I whispered Madam de Vilmane that her friend Madam Futil was in a terrible embarras, and expected her to supper. I will go this minute, answered she, and then made her excuses, to the company, pretending she was under a necessity of supping with a man whose credit was necessary to her. In thanking me for being so good to come and give her notice, she presented her hand, and I led her out. Her coach was not in waiting, and I had nothing but a hackney to offer her.

her. She got into it, and I conducted her to Futil's door, telling her as we went along the melancholy adventure. How imprudent are you, said she; no body deserves more to be caught than you. But the evil is done, the remedy must be found. We arrived, and she remained alone in the street with her laquais, till my hackney and I were far enough off, and then went in, saying, that a friend had set her down at the gate.

I went home plunged in the deepest grief. The pains to which lovers are most sensible, are those of love itself. I mean those that interest their tender sentiments, and disturb the course of their pleasures. Of this kind was the grief that oppressed me. Sometimes, I was in fear that Madam Futil could not succeed in gaining her domestics. Sometimes, I supposed that she had gained that point, but to no purpose, because her husband, too much irritated, would hear of no explication. A moment after I drew, in my own imagination, a most dreadful picture of this poor woman's fate, by the knowledge I had of her character and that of her husband. I read in futurity the steps of the one and the other, and spent a great deal of time in most afflicting reflections upon this event. In fine, the grief with which I was penetrated, quite dispirited me, and I was thrown into a

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slumber,

slumber, but scarce had I shut my eyes when I dreamed that I was in Madam Futil's house with a large company, and saw her husband come in persuading of his misfortune, and fancying that the way to soften it was to let every body know of it (in good earnest he was capable of doing so) he poured out, with more fury than decency, a torrent of the most scurrilous language against her, and concluded with a couple of hearty slaps in her face. This sight transported me with rage, I laid hold of him, and without considering where I was, disposed myself to act the master of the house, by throwing him out at the window. Some persons, more reasonable than I, having attempted to get him out of my hands, I struggled hard to keep hold of my prey. Here I awaked, and observing my valet de chambre standing at my bed's head, who told me that my loud and dreadful cries had awaked him; he appeared to be very much concerned at the condition in which he found me. He had known me more than twelve years; and the habit of living with me had given him a certain liberty which my easiness still augmented, and which reason hindered me from disapproving. He asked me with tears in his eyes the cause of my trouble. Is there for a person in affliction a greater pleasure than that of telling his misfortunes? I could

could not withstand it. Grief got the better of discretion, and I told him the story of my amours, and their success, without naming Madam Futil or her husband. But he knew my haunts too well, not to guess at the name which I concealed from him. It was, besides, pointed at by several circumstances, which I particularised with all the fire that a lover is capable of.

Perhaps there may be several people who, without reflecting on the condition in which I was, will condemn this confidence; but I shall make them this plain and simple answer; that I had a very great regard for my valet de chambre. I never had that ridiculous haughtiness so natural to upstarts, which makes them look upon those who have the misfortune to serve them, not as men, but as a particular species very much inferior to theirs. Nevertheless, take out of the world Gold and Ridicule, all men will be alike. This is my way of thinking: I look upon a faithful domestic as an unhappy friend, his misfortune is an additional title to my commiserating his fate. Is friendship then obliged to bring proofs of birth? No surely, it is confidence alone that establishes it: this man had mine, he was therefore my friend. He remained long with me, and told me in the best manner he could, what he thought

would contribute most to comfort me, and in some measure he succeeded, since he talked me asleep, which for this time was more peaceable. I dreamed, however, and always upon the same subject. Methought Futil had parted with his wife, that he was running about among his friends to obtain, by their credit, a Lettre de Cachet, to put her into a convent; for he believed, in good earnest, that the infidelity of his wife interested the government. Every one of those to whom he addressed himself, more curious than concerned, asked the particulars of his story, and he published her turpitude with an energy very amusing for them. My imagination, lively, and moved by the interest which I took in this affair, ran over several months in an instant. In short, I saw the poor Futil convinced, by the inutility of his clamours, and the representations of his friends, that sovereigns seldom take upon them to punish the crime with which he reproached his wife; none of them, as yet, having found means to imprison all the women of his kingdom.

In the morning pretty early, Madam de Vilmane came to my house, and her visit much surprised me. I sent to beg she would grant me a moment's time to put on my cloaths. The impatience she was under to
speak

she was so good as to allow me to receive her in my night-gown. I was charmed with this attention on her part; so in she came. She had an air of satisfaction that astonished me, and at the same time gave me some courage. Be easy, Sir, said she, the storm is over, and I reckon Madam Futil and you are got out of the scrape, without any other punishment but the terror you were both under. Her husband came home late last night. We were at table, ten in number, all people of good humour and jovial. Your Belle and I had cause to be disquieted, but we did all we could to conceal our concern from the rest. Upon the appearance of the master of the house, some of the men got up and spoke to him, but he made no answer, and sat down at table, where he ate like an Ogre for half an hour, without saying one word. At length he addressed himself to me, and told me with a sneer, that he had passed the evening with his Mistress at a certain Madam Després's, who made it her trade to accommodate and entertain lovers. He made a stupid, but ample, encomium on the disposition of that house. At length, finding that he bewildered himself, he looked at his wife, and said, Oh! parbleu, Madam you must help me out, and since you know the story,

pray end it. This was said with an easy tone that a man of quality could scarce have been capable of taking in such a case. We all fell a laughing, begging that he would not oblige his Lady to relate a story which she could not know. She had even the courage to join with us in the laugh. She knows it, morbleu, bawled he aloud, and just as well as I; but I will tell you since she refuses to speak. He then recounted how he had seen and examined you in his hackney, under the shade of a wooden glass door, which he held half up. He concluded with telling his wife, in a very absolute tone, that she might return to Madam Després's, for in his house she should not sleep. We still continued laughing. In fine, he turned quite angry, and against every one in the company at the same time. He reproached me for having been aiding in deceiving him, the day I pretended to have accompanied her and you to the wood of Boulogne, and seasoned his reproaches with a good number of pretty terms that displeased me much to hear, and which would not please me to repeat. Afterwards he threw his plate at his wife's head, swearing heartily. By good luck the plate flew over the poor Lady's head, who at this signal, fled into her chamber, where I, with the other ladies, followed to condole with her.

You

You may easily judge that she wept bitterly, and when tears and sobs gave her leave to speak, she told us, that not only she had not been at Madam Despres's, but that she had not even been out of her own house. Immediately all the Ladies, who laughed in their sleeves at this pretty scene, joined unanimously in a league against the husband, and one of them went to find him, and after loading him with reproaches, told him that his wife had not been abroad that day. *That remains to be proved*, answered he, breaking a bell rope to call the Lady's servants as witnesses. He examined the porter, the coachman, and the two footmen, conjunctly and separately. They had got their lesson, and behaved to admiration. Then men and women all fell upon poor Futil, and told him so often, he deserved not that his wife should ever more look upon him, that he thought himself as guilty as they pleased to make him. He was conducted like a malefactor into the afflicted Lady's chamber, where he made her formal excuses, to the satisfaction of the whole company, and to the no small diversion of Madam Futil and me. In short, they embraced, and every one assumed the air of gaiety, which they had been obliged to suspend during the boisterous scene. Truly, said Futil, you would all have been deceived as well

as I, for it was almost night. Ah! Madam, said he to his wife, you will find that it was that little Madam ****. She has a coach like yours, and her livery resembles mine. I am glad to know that she goes to Madam Després's. Madam Futil wrote me this morning, that her husband had deserved the pardon of his fault, by a behaviour the most polite and tender, and begged I would inform you of all the particulars of this memorable transaction.

I was charmed to hear that Després's scheme had succeeded, and that my dear Mistress had got herself out of this unlucky scrape. But I was sensible that I could see her no more, and this forbidding idea disturbed my joy. Madam de Vilmane endeavoured to dissipate my fears, and engaged me to sup at Futil's the next day. I represented, in vain, that it was proper I should absent myself from that house for some time; she insisted on my going, and promised to come there herself. I was forced to yield. She had a certain easy air, and, at the same time, so decisive, that one scarce durst refuse to obey her; but this is not saying enough of that charming Lady, to whom I have had so many and great obligations, that I think it proper to make her better known.

Madam

Madam de Vilmane, though a little thick, was of a good size, and well proportioned shape: a certain unaffected carriage gave her a genteel air; her hair was brown, well disposed, and very long; a complexion clear and smooth, an oval face, and regular features; large black eyes, sometimes lively and sparkling, sometimes soft and languishing, always charming; her mouth somewhat large, but furnished with a set of white and well ranked teeth; a bosom such as no woman could look at but with envy; the hand small, with fine arms, graceful in their motions, a leg well shaped, even brilliant, and the foot much smaller than women of her size usually have.

Her humour was a little philosophical, and her heart not exempted from pride and disdain, yet still with politeness; upon the reserve with strangers, and with her friends, but few in number, open and obliging; discreet to excess, and obstinately constant. She was infinitely witty, had a great deal of delicacy, a sound judgment, solidity enough, and rather too much understanding. With her, the perfections of the mind were far above personal merit; in short, to see her was to love her, but, on a nearer acquaintance, it rose, and with justice, to adoration; for, laying aside a little caprice, she
was

was a woman perfect, the whole sex have more or less of this failing : can we make the same elogium of all ?

Such was Madam de Vilmane at the age of twenty-eight, the widow for three years past of a good gentleman, who died Captain of Dragoons. She enjoyed an estate of 35000 livres a year, with which she did herself great honour. A certain sympathy, which took its rise in the conformity of inclinations, had made her Madam Futil's friend, and she was extremely attached to her. Tho' she had the reputation of being very much above certain foibles, yet she had not, for that, the less compassion for those of others. It was her benevolent character that had prompted her to serve us, and I was at a loss how to express my gratitude. All that I desire, said she, is that you both may be happy : in that I shall find a more than sufficient reward for my trouble. The pleasure of obliging is the first and most noble recompence of a good deed.

In all appearance I could not, for a long time, pretend to see my Mistress but at her own house. Madam de Vilmane was so good to pity me on account of this constraint, and to permit me to make her frequent visits, where I would often have an opportunity of seeing Madam Futil.

For

For some time I took the benefit of these advantages; they appeared to me much inferior to that unconfined tranquillity which I had enjoyed at Madam Despres's house; but I was persuaded there was no such thing as pretending to go any more there, and, by degrees, I brought myself to be satisfied with the present such as it was, and not to torment myself with the remembrance of a more agreeable time past. I went often to Monsieur Futil's, who received me well, and seemed to take pleasure in my company, when an event, which I little expected, made me judge that his friendship was more necessary than ever.

I was pursued criminally by Javotte's father and mother, as the ravisher of their daughter. They only asked my life and 100000 livres damages and interests.

Once successful and always so, was pretty much what I imagined. The triumphant victory I obtained when I had to do with the Abbé, had made me a bold champion in the field of Chicane, and I flattered myself I should come off with the same honour in this second engagement. I went to my Protector in ordinary, to whom I communicated, very ingenuously, my fears of the impending storm. I told him all that had passed betwixt Javotte and me, and I told it him with all the frankness imaginable.

imaginable. I concealed not the least circumstance, without being assured, or indeed much concerned, if these particularities would serve to my justification.

He heard me with more calmness than a friend ought to have done. He promised to render me all the services in his power, and even engaged himself to see, that very day, two Magistrates his friends, who were capable of doing a great deal in my affair. He told me next day, that he had, according to promise, seen his friends, who did not think there was any great occasion to be apprehensive of dangerous consequences, that he had prepossessed them in my favour, and that they would do all that was possible to extricate me out of this embarrass. I thanked him, as the service he flattered himself to have rendered me deserved, and we parted, very well satisfied with one another.

About eight days after I received a packet containing twelve copies of a very wicked but well-penned libel, entitled, *The history of the fair Favotte*. I found the facts so exactly particularised in it, that I was in a terrible rage against the person who had been so indiscreet to publish them. I ran to Madam de Vilmane's, whose friendship began to be absolutely necessary to me. I read this pretty piece to her, and I confessed that every thing contained

contained in it was true. You must be very imprudent, said she, to have repeated these facts to some one who has been so little your friend, as to inform the public of the whole adventure. I swore that I had never mentioned it but to Futil, and I repeated it so often that she at last believed me. We were both persuaded that jealousy had made Futil form the project of my ruin. Leave to me the care of this affair, said the good Lady. I shall endeavour to trace the evil to its true source, and perhaps shall be able to ward off the intended blow. I promised to take no step without her participation, and I left her, overjoyed with the thoughts of having so good a friend.

When an honest man is exposed to some misfortune, I do not know whether he would be so well satisfied with seeing it at an end, as he is when he finds a true friend, whose tenderness shares his troubles, and whose officious zeal seeks to soften them. I was better pleased to see how much Madam de Vilmane interested herself for me, than if it had been notified to me that Javotte's parents desisted from the accusation which they had brought against me, or rather (for this confession degrades not my heart) I pushed sensibility so far, as to rejoice at the misfortune with which I was threatened, since it gave
me

me an opportunity of knowing how far the goodness of Madam de Vilmane's heart extended.

She had recourse to one of her female friends, universally acquainted in Paris, who had long been in possession of the good graces of a man who knew the Gordian knots of the most mysterious and secret adventures. She employed the most flattering and artful sollicitation to gain her to my interest, and did not leave her till she promised to serve me. Her endeavours were crowned with success; for in two days I received a message to come to Madam de Vilmane's, where I went directly. She put into my hands six hundred copies of the libel in question, and the manuscript from which it had been printed. I immediately saw that it had been writ by Futil's secretary. Though I had ground to believe him my enemy, I was extremely concerned to find that I was now assured of it. This is not all, said the Lady, I have discovered that Futil is the author of this writing. I answered, that I was of the same opinion. I have talked of it, continued she, to Madam Futil, with a view to persuade her that he has not forgot the trick you played him, and that she must be constantly upon her guard. She received my advice with an insupportable haughtiness, insisting

insisting that her husband is incapable of so shocking a procedure. I shewed the manuscript, but she pretended not to know the hand, on the contrary, she flew into a passion with me, unworthy of the friendly part I had acted in what concerned her. In short, she pushed the invective so far, as to accuse you and me as the inventors of this calumny, in order to throw a blemish upon her husband's character in the world. In fine, we parted upon very indifferent terms, and I believe our correspondence is at an end. I love her no more, cried I; no, I love her no more, since she is capable of being ungrateful to one who has rendered us such signal services, she is no longer deserving of my love. So much the better for you, replied this generous friend, for, truly, she appears to me to be very much disposed to see you no more. I do not complain of her ingratitude, but I am sorry that she wants prudence with regard to herself, and esteem for us two. Happily for her, I have nothing of the woman in me upon the side of indiscretion. Others, in my place, by publishing her intrigues, would render her much more uneasy than she makes me: but she has nothing to fear from me upon that head. On the contrary, I will endeavour to oblige her, which, in my opinion, is the most noble revenge.

The

The behaviour of Madam Futil having provoked me against her, as much as the generosity of Madam de Vilmane ravished me, my love was from that moment extinguished. We had a long conference upon the unhappy affair which I had with Javotte's parents, but all that we could say upon the subject was productive of no expedients to terminate it. At last, it was resolved that I should advise with people versed in such affairs, in what manner I should act to get out of the scrape.

Advocates, as able as famed, whom I went to consult, were astonished when I told them that I was the person accused. They advised me directly to leave the Kingdom, if I was allowed so much time; and they seemed to be surprised that I was not already taken up. Upon a full explication of the affair they judged that, in the main, I was not very guilty, but that I might, without a miracle, be hanged for form's sake.

I confess that the necessity of abandoning my native country, to avoid an ignominious death, made me tremble. I went directly to Madam de Vilmane's, and she comforted me by the hopes of an agreement with my antagonists. But my mind ran continually upon the grave and solemn threats of the Lawyers, and nothing could render my situation

ation supportable, but the part that this amiable Lady took in it. She told me, I must not neglect the advice which had been given me, and that the best thing I could do was to leave the kingdom. Alas! Madam, answered I, your friendship alone diminishes the horror of my misfortunes, and you advise me to leave you! No, I cannot resolve on it; I will here wait for what Providence is pleased to determine about my fate; if I die, I shall not have, at least, this to reproach myself with, that I have been the cause of my own death, by depriving myself of the pleasure of seeing you; for I perceive that you are become necessary to my happiness. Yes, Madam (pardon this confession, which is excusable in my present wretched state) your beauty, much less than the goodness of your heart, inspires me with sentiments far more lively, than those of friendship and gratitude. I loved Madam Futil, it is true, but I never loved her as I do you, and you are the first who hath conveyed tender sentiments to my heart through the channel of Virtue.

Madam de Vilmane did not love me, but she esteemed, and wished me well; she thought me too much to be pitied to add the mortification of a reprimand for the declaration I had made; she was afraid for my liberty,

liberty, and even for my life, and made use of the same motive for my departure, which I had urged for permitting me to remain; but as I seemed to be a little obstinate, Well, Sir, said she, you shall do what you think proper, but never hope that I shall think you love me, if you have so little regard to my advice. Can you wantonly risk giving a woman, whom you love, the grief of seeing you arrested, perhaps, in her own house? A tone of tender spite animated these few words, and penetrated to the bottom of my heart: from that very moment I was determined to be gone, and the impossibility in which I found myself of disobeying her commands, was a stronger proof of my love, than the most passionate protestations.

We agreed that I should leave Paris next morning early, and gave mutual addresses how to direct our letters. On leaving this Lady's house, where I staid as long as possibly I could, I took it into my head, the better to screen my designs from the knowledge of my enemies, to go and sup at Madam Futil's, and I was accordingly guilty of this folly, and sure none could be greater.

I had not been seen at supper in that house for a considerable time. The master received me coldly, and the mistress but indifferently.

I had

I had not openly broke with her, consequently none could guess at the motive of their indifference to me. Those who were there (always the same people) were at no loss to know me again, and did not fail to ask of one another what could be the motive of my appearing there; and they all concluded that Love had conducted me to the fair Lady's feet. I read this idea on their countenances, and I did not give myself the trouble to undeceive them.

The whole company engaged in play, a laquai came and told M. Futil that a person wanted him, and must absolutely speak with him; he seemed to be under some confusion, but I took his cards, and he went out. When the party was ended, it was too late to begin another, so that conversation supplied the place of cards while we waited for supper. I slipped out for a moment to tell my people that I intended to return home after supper, but I found none of them in the anti-chamber. As it was of importance that they should not make me wait, I went down stairs in quest of them, and having met with one of them in the yard, I gave orders that my coach should be there precisely at eleven. As I was returning under the vestibule, Futil's closet door opened, and I perceived the Abbé Ramy coming out of it, who no sooner saw me than

than he endeavoured to go in again; but I brushed up to the door and was got into the closet almost as soon as he: I immediately shut the door, without saying one word, and eyed Futil and the Abbé with looks full of fury and indignation. I observed that they were both under the greatest consternation.

What is the matter with you, said I with an affected tranquility obvious to them both?

The Abbé Ramy knew me, and that I was violent when angry; he chose rather to calm me by submissions than to augment my wrath by dissimulation, and therefore throwing himself at my feet, confessed ingenuously that M. Futil interested himself for Javotte's parents, and that he had now given him a packet, of which he knew not the contents. Let me see it, said I in a terrible tone; upon which he put it in my hand. I asked if it was Futil who had wrote what was in it, he answered yes. Well, replied I, opening it, you must take the trouble of putting another cover. What did I see, Heavens! a Lettre de Cachet to take me up. I put it in my pocket, and then read a letter which Futil wrote to an honest exempt of his acquaintance, who was to put the King's order in execution. I have preserved it still, and its singularity induces me to insert an exact copy of it here.

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At length, my dear Sir, I have obtained the order, and it now depends upon you to put our man into a safe place. I exhort you to act with great prudence, because you have to deal with a military Financer, who never goes without arms; nothing would give me so much grief, as that your activity should put us in the case of losing a man of your merit, and so useful to the public as you are. You will find the hare in the seat, or at my house until twelve. I have the honour of being more than any man in the world,
Your most humble, &c.

FUTIL.

This letter proves how ridiculous and ill-grounded are the sottish airs of grandeur in certain people, since they are capable of degrading themselves upon occasion.

I had two pocket pistols about me, according to my usual custom of carrying them always without ever making use of them. I was tempted to purge the earth of these two monsters, but I was wise enough not to do it; and I am glad of it since. I had no occasion, particularly at this time, for being chargeable with the death of two men, of whom the one was in a public station, and moreover in his own house; and the other a priest, and consequently, against all right and reason, a man considerable. I left them without saying one word, and perceiving, as I

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went

went out, that there was no body in the anti-chamber, I locked the closet door and put the key in my pocket. I went directly out of the house, and walked home on foot very peaceably, persuaded that they could not obtain a new order in the short time I wanted to prepare for my departure.

I ordered my cloaths, &c. to be put into trunks, and at midnight left Paris in a travelling coach, to which I had ordered six horses to be put. I left a letter for Madam de Vilmane, which contained a full detail of my new adventure, and I wrote to her that I took the route to Bourdeaux, as we had agreed.

At Lonjumeau I took post horses, and sent back my own to Paris; ordering those who carried them back not to mention where they had left me. I kept my valet de chambre who was in the coach with me, and two footmen on horseback. My design was to go from Bourdeaux to Bayonne, and from thence to Madrid. I was curious to see Spain, from the account which my brother, who frequently visited that country, had given me of it. I did not travel like a fugitive. I could not bring myself to think I was a criminal, nor act the part of one. I had, however, in my coach three pair of pistols, and my two servants had as many at their saddles or in their pockets; so that, being very well
assured

assured of their fidelity and courage, I might hope, if I was pursued, that it would cost dear to stop me. In passing Orleans, I went to visit the Intendant, whom I had known at Paris, and who was surprized to see me. I told him that I was going to see an estate which I had bought near Toulouse: he believed me, and wanted that I should make some stay at his house. I could not agree to that, but promised, at my return, which I fixed to the end of October, that I should stay at Orleans so long as he pleased. On leaving the Intendant's, where I had dined, I returned alone and on foot to my inn. At the turning of a street, I was obliged to make way for two men riding post on horseback. One of them observing me, turned short and went to speak to the other who advanced towards me, and saluting me by name, asked what I was doing here. I concluded myself lost, and that these people came to arrest me; but upon their coming close up, I discovered the young Count Doran, with whom I had been so intimate in my youth, and whose sister had been my first inclination. We embraced with great marks of friendship, and he whispered in my ear that he had fought at Paris, killed an Officer, and was now going to leave France. And where do you intend to go, said I? He answered,

ed, that he resolved to stop at Bourdeaux.

Let us then fly together, replied I; come along with me. We went to my inn, where I shewed him my coach of four places, and offered him one, which he accepted. We set out directly. The laquais that followed him was acquainted with travelling, for which reason we gave him the first saddle, and we found the benefit of doing so during the whole journey.

I was charmed with having company. I hoped that the society of a man amiable, and likewise persecuted by fortune, could not but be very advantageous to me. On our departure we promised to communicate, reciprocally, the motives that obliged us to abandon our native country. The Count was willing to favour me with the history of his life, but was so curious to know mine, that I had the complaisance to relate all that had happened to me, during the long space of time we had lost sight of one another. He found me more unfortunate than guilty, and endeavoured to keep up my spirits, by the hopes that were to be conceived from Madam de Vilmane's assistance. He saw plainly enough that I was only affected with the good things that were said of this Lady, and I had spoken of her with too much fire to prevent his discovering my love. He congratulated me on the happiness

ness I had of being in friendship with such a valuable woman; thanked me for the trouble I had taken of acquainting him with my adventures, and then began the following history of his own misfortunes.

THE LIFE we both of us led, said he, having occasioned our separation so soon as you was certain that my sister had for ever renounced the world, I must from that period begin my narration; because you are ignorant of the principal events that render the sequel interesting.

We were plunged in grief during the whole time of my sister's noviciat, but her profession in the convent to which she had retired, by giving the finishing stroke, made us cast about for some comfort. It was with great difficulty we could find any. Our pleasures were momentary, and our pains *durable*. At the expiration of two years, our affliction was still new. Paris was no longer agreeable to my parents, they formed the project of retiring to a fine country seat which we have in Brittany, some leagues from Rennes. I accompanied them, and for some time lived agreeably enough. We were necessarily obliged to see a great deal of company, as we could not dispense with making visits of ceremony, and of receiving those of the whole Gentry of the county who knew us.

After having in this manner gone through the ceremonial, we singled out some particular persons as intimates, whose characters suited us best, and who, in the retired manner we intended to live, could supply the place of the agreeable acquaintances we had left at Paris.

My father had constantly combatted, with all the rhetoric he was master of, my mother's favourable opinion of Jansenism. But in Brittany he altered his method, and that from a motive of complaisance. A woman attached to the world would die of languor in the most beautiful country seat. A Jansenist Lady thinks herself perfectly happy in it, provided she has a great many books, a Curate of her own way of thinking, and some good people with whom she can freely exclaim against the opposite party. My mother gave herself up, without reserve, to the bent of her inclination, and was not to be seen but at table. In the beginning she pretended to moralise as we were eating, but my father stopped her mouth for ever, by declaring he would return to Paris (where he would not allow her to act the Devotee) if she pretended to hinder him from living according to his own fancy, as she did to her own.

His taste was now unalterably fixed in the pleasures of hunting, a good table, and gaming. These three amusements equally divided,
and

and took up his whole time, without losing a single minute. His society was composed of people much about his own age, who had the same inclinations.

When I saw that every one of the family pursued the scheme of life that was most agreeable to their taste, I asked permission of my parents to follow a plan of amusement different from either of theirs, and which I would lay down for myself. My father granted my request, and for almost two years I lived as I thought proper. I read all the new things that appeared at Paris, which were regularly sent me. I had exceeding good saddle horses, and often took an airing on horseback in the neighbourhood.

I happened to get acquainted with the Count de Florian, an old Nobleman and our neighbour. He was also as fond of horses, and this conformity of taste soon brought us to such an intimacy that we became inseparable.

I often passed whole weeks at Monsieur de Florian's castle, who loved me as a son, and whom I respected as a father. My serious temper was suitable to a man of his years, and I lived as agreeably with him as if he had been a young man like myself.

I had often occasion to see Mademoiselle de Florian, his daughter, who was pretty near of my age, little, but well shaped. Her eyes were of that kind, which, without the

epithets of fine and brilliant, may be justly said to be extremely agreeable. Her complexion was fair, almost white, her skin surprisingly fine, with a more beautiful coloris than nature usually furnishes. All these charms were animated with a vivacity seldom found in women of such complexions. She was extremely witty, and this wit was improved by many acquirements, the more valuable, as the fair sex is but seldom endowed with such advantages.

I was born to a great estate and of noble extraction; consequently I despised sciences. Mademoiselle de Florian cured me of this wretched prepossession, and easily proved that real merit is only of our own acquisition.

In effect, birth is an advantage which we owe to chance. The proof of this is evident, since we find but too many, whose sentiments no ways correspond with their birth, and who have occasion to call themselves gentlemen that they may be looked upon as such. We are sent to the camp, we behave with courage in the field. Ah! how many are there among us, who have not understanding enough to be otherwise? How many do their duty without knowing how, or for what reason?

By acquisitions, the only advantages worthy of man, he instructs himself in the arts
and

and sciences. He avoids mistakes and errors. He discovers the secrets of nature, penetrates into the bowels of the earth, and there views the production of gold, the petrefaction of water into crystal, and the conversion of dew into pearls. He ascends to the regions above, there to examine the course of the stars, in short, the sciences instruct kings, retain the people in the subordination that forms states, and teaches the Ministry political knowledge. It is by their influence that men have been drawn out of their caverns; that they have been brought to relish society, and taught to seek security within walls, tranquillity in cottages, and magnificence in palaces.

Ingenious men do honour to nations. If we make less account of their services, than of the exploits of great Captains, it is because we are men of mean and vulgar sentiments, more curious to possess than to know. The warriors defend their country, but men of learning render it illustrious and flourishing. What would such a Nobleman do with his courage, if the Legislators had not fixed his rank and condition? If they had not determined, in his favour, a superiority over the inferior classes of men? If the learned had not made so many immense discoveries to procure him, at first, subsistence, and thereafter the conveniences of life? Their useful works

instruct and render him a man, by inspiring him with the love of Virtue. Those of them that are only amusing, employ his leisure hours, and often afford him greater advantages, by conducting him, by way of diversion, to the knowledge of things, that, in the sequel, become very useful.

Corneille, by elevating the mind of the spectator, and Moliere, by making him laugh at his own proper failings, have gained more friends to Virtue, than Bourdaloüe has made enemies to Vice.

Without men of letters, we should neither have education nor religion; consequently no principles of conduct: Hence, we should live as brutes, with this difference, that we should not even have that natural, but just, instinct, sufficient for animals. Providence hath refused it to man, endowing him with Reason, which sciences cultivate.

Such were the reflections which profound knowledge dictated to Mademoiselle de Florian, to free me from prejudice, which inspires us with a contempt of what we do not know. REASON alone can do much with a man, but when she is young, and calls in to her assistance the GRACES and BEAUTY, to persuade him, it is impossible for him to resist her. I became, at first, passionately in love with this learned Beauty; and thereafter
begged

begged she would give me a tincture of her knowledge.

She taught me geography, and a little history; then put me upon studying the languages; and I learned the Italian and English. The lessons she gave me requiring a close attendance on her part, I had an opportunity of seeing her every day, and my passion for her augmented without my perceiving it. I was in the delightful habit of living with her, and the facility I found in satisfying the bent of my inclination scarce permitted me to examine what passed in my heart.

My mother was become one of those suspicious females whose principal amusement is to disturb the pleasures of others. She was a woman, and consequently it was no hard task for her, in speaking of the young Lady, to discover how much I loved her. She told me of it, I inwardly confessed the charge, but outwardly denied it, knowing well she would not fail to disapprove of my love. She began by requiring, without an absolute command, that I should have the complaisance to go seldomer to Monsieur de Florian's. She found, upon all occasions, pretences for engaging me to remain about her. I easily obeyed, having never known what it was to fail in the respect due to a mother.

However, I always found opportunities of

making my escape. My father, who was not ignorant how much I was attached to Mademoiselle de Florian, after some advices on this growing passion, left me at liberty to indulge or get the better of it.

He told me that Mademoiselle de Florian was a girl of the highest merit, but that I ought to consider that as riches now a days determined the suitability of marriages, it was almost impossible I should become this young Lady's husband, because she ~~was~~ much richer than I. I gave a deaf ear to this difficulty; I hoped to gain the father, and I employed my best endeavours to obtain success in an enterprise on which depended my happiness.

When my mother saw that my father had the weakness to approve of my designs (this was the term she was pleased to give to his goodness) she took another way to defeat my views.

She attacked my father upon the point of honour, by representing that it was a shameful thing for a young man, like me, of birth and fortune, to pass his life in a country place; that he ought to send me to Paris, with a view to get me into the army, which was my trade, and not study nor hunting. My father was touched with this reproach, he found it of a matchless solidity, and spoke of it to me as a man fully convinced. I was the more vexed

as I found it impossible to oppose my father's views, who resolved that I should go in two months, and address myself at Paris to one of his friends, who commanded a company of the Mousquetaires.

Hitherto I had made no formal declaration of Love to Mademoiselle de Florian. We saw ~~one~~ another often, and felt our hearts mutually enflamed without giving our tongues the liberty of telling what we felt. We had for one another that sweet complaisance that lovers are only capable of, and lived together in that intimate familiarity which unites two persons sensible of their attachment. I was too much afflicted with the necessity of leaving her, not to make her perceive my grief. She desired to know the cause, and changed colour upon my reciting all that had passed at my father's. Her sensibility did not permit me to doubt of her inclination. I fell at her feet, and, taking hold of one of her hands, which I wet with tears, made solemn protestation that I would love her while I lived.

The Count her father surprised me in this attitude; he loved me almost as much as his daughter, and observing us both plunged in grief, asked the cause of it, with that goodness, so rare in a father, and scarce to be expected in a friend. When he knew what threw us into so terrible a condition, he embraced

braced us, mingling his tears with ours, and promised to make us happy. He did not condemn my father's project; on the contrary, he was entirely for my executing it. He made me sensible, by reasons just and solid, that I should be unworthy of living, did I not render myself useful to my country in the military way, to which my birth called me.

I made no reply to a man from whom I expected my happiness, and for whom his quality of father to my Mistress inspired me with the most tender respect. I will say farther, I felt, for the first time, a thirst of glory, and all that embarrassed me was, how to reconcile it with my love.

In the mean time, Monsieur de Florian saw my father several times, and appeared to be so well disposed in my favour, that my father ventured to speak to him of my passion for his lovely daughter, and was greatly surprised to find that he preferred her happiness to riches. In fine, they concluded to unite our fates by marriage. My mother seeing the affair so far advanced, thought proper to represent that I was as yet young; and that if I married I would not willingly enter into the service. The two fathers approved of her advice, and it was resolved I should go to Paris, and remain there some years, and that I should not be married till I had obtained a regiment.

About

About this time there arrived in our neighbourhood a young widow, extremely rich, named la Baronne de Rillac. She had beauty, a tolerable share of wit, a great deal of vivacity, and, above all, the modish and coquetish airs that distinguish Ladies in high life. These qualities, supported by a considerable retinue, dazzled the whole province to that pitch that whoever did not set a great value on the friendship of this Lady, gave but a bad idea of themselves. Her favour was courted with attentions and devoirs of all kinds, and she was as much in vogue as a man at Court, who is a favourite without deserving it. Every one had their views. Some had designs on her heart, others on her fortune, and some on both. She received her visitants as a Divinity accustomed to homages, and was familiar but with a few. I had the misfortune to be of this number. I visited Madam de Rillac as a neighbour, and my civilities, though more lively and more easy than those of our country gentry, did not flow from a motive more interesting. She, however, thought they did; she examined me, found me to her liking, and without telling me, gave me to understand, by a thousand little attentions, that I might speak of love without being afraid of meeting with a bad reception. This discovery made
me

me tremble. Methought I foresaw all the misfortunes I should encounter upon account of this Lady. She made several parties of hunting with my father's pack of hounds, numerous and in good order. She found this diversion charming, and the pleasure she took in it cemented her correspondence with our family, which vexed me still more.

As an additional misfortune, my mother, quite contrary to reason and expectation, became her friend. In effect, Madam Doran was a professed devotee, and upon the decline, consequently her inclinations and manner of living were entirely opposite to the taste and conduct of Madam de Rillac, young, handsome, and as giddy as can be well imagined, which is to say a great deal as times now go.

Confidences, false or sincere, are very usual among women. Madam de Rillac imparted a great many to my mother, which preceded that of the favourable opinion she had conceived of me; to this she joined the rich history of her fortune, which flattered her new friend. In short, she insinuated that my merit prompted her to enrich me, and that if I would render myself worthy of her good graces, she would give me in property an estate of 25000 livres a year, of which she could dispose, without reckoning a share of fifty thousand crowns a year.

I was

I was born to inherit forty thousand livres a year, on the death of my father and mother; so that I had the distant prospect of a brilliant fortune, since Monsieur de Florian's estate exceeded eighty thousand livres. But all this was nothing in my mother's eyes, who found an occasion of augmenting my patrimony about two hundred thousand crowns, of making me enjoy an immense revenue with a woman whom she loved, and of preventing my marriage with a girl whom she could not suffer, without being able to tell for what reason.

She took upon her to settle and conclude my marriage with her friend, without consulting me; and when every thing was decided, made the overture to me. I refused point-blank, being almost distracted to see that my father was weak enough to fail in the engagements he had made with Monsieur de Florian; and that he sacrificed to interest the regard due to a man who wanted to enrich me with all that he possessed. The whole family was from this moment in a combustion, and I found myself under the melancholy necessity of asking to be gone for Paris, to deliver me from the persecution I was under, more insufferable, than losing the occasions of seeing my Mistress, for whom my love increased daily.

I did

I did not endeavour to conceal my causes of discontent from her, but we made a mystery of it to her father, who, believing that the agreement made between our two families still subsisted, had the complaisance to promise that he would accompany me to Paris, to present me to friends of the first distinction, from whom he expected great favour to me.

An offer so obliging did but more and more embarrass me. I was afraid, not without reason, that my parents would be offended, and I was much at a loss how to acquaint Monsieur de Florian with what had happened.

His daughter, seeing him so well disposed in our favour, did not hesitate to tell him our distress: he was sensibly touched with it, and had the goodness not to be offended with me. He did still better; as in the present conjuncture it was not proper that we should go together to Paris, he ordered me to set out by myself, and promised to follow me in a short time.

Proper measures were taking for my departure, which I solicited earnestly, and which we were all afraid of; I, because I was going to be separated from the dear object of my wishes; Mademoiselle de Florian, because she lost, at least, for a long time, a tender and passionate lover; the Baroness, because the extraordinary desire which I shewed

shewed to be gone to Paris, was contrary to her views, and alarmed her love; and my parents, in fine, because they loved me, and were sorry to be obliged to bear with my absence. The Baroness was, besides, apprehensive that my being at a distance would produce no good to her, or that, if I was capable of forgetting Mademoiselle de Florian, this change could not be brought about but by my attachment to some beauty of Paris.

The idea of inconstancy is always the reigning idea in the mind of a woman. Madam de Rillac fixed therefore upon this last conjecture. She persuaded herself that I would easily forget Mademoiselle de Florian, but that I would not for that return to her. The more she was struck with this fear, the more she studied means to guard against such a disappointment, and she could think of none better than to follow me to Paris. Every thing favoured her designs. She was a widow, absolute mistress of herself, and they knew nothing of her affairs in our province; she took the advantage of this to suppose that her presence was absolutely necessary at Paris, to look after a law-suit of consequence, and declared that she would set out in eight days. My father asked her a place for me in her coach. I did not find that she made ceremony enough to grant it, though

though my parents thought otherwise. In short, the day of our departure was fixed.

The day before I remained from morning to night at Monsieur Florian's, who comforted me, as well as his daughter, in the most tender and moving manner. In fine, I bid adieu to my dear Mistress. She permitted me to write to her, and promised to be punctual in her answers. We mutually swore eternal love, and then took our last farewell. I carried along with me her picture and my own, both which she had herself drawn. She desired that I would have them put into snuff-boxes at Paris, gave me a great many diamonds to ornament them with, and I was as content as I could be on leaving her.

Madam de Rillac made the journey as agreeable as she could, but my grief disclosed itself in proportion to our distance from Brittany, and she had but a dull companion of me.

She alighted at a friend's of hers, wife to a rich Financier, whose palace was as magnificent as vast. An apartment for a young man was obligingly offered to me, but I refused it, and went to lodge at a *Hagnio*, with two domestics, who composed my whole equipage.

One of the two was of Marseilles, a cunning sly fellow, whose vivacity pleased me:
he

he gained my confidence by speaking often in praise of Mademoiselle de Florian, and quite the reverse of Madam de Rillac. Could he chuse a better way to get into favour with me?

I gave him the commission of seeking out one of the most eminent Jewellers, to do what was necessary with the two pictures, both as to the setting of the diamonds, and furnishing the boxes into which the pictures were to be placed. He found me one who was the more in repute, that his conversation was amusing, and that he kept a coach. He made me pay for these advantages. He changed my diamonds for smaller ones, and had the address to persuade me, at least for that instant, that they were the same I had given him. I took patience, as did all Paris, whom he had the art of making dupes; and Felix, the name of my servant, undertook to transmit safely my picture, set in a gold snuff-box of curious workmanship, to Mademoiselle de Florian. The Count her father was to know nothing of this secret. Felix directed the snuff-box to the waiting-maid, with whom he assured me he was on very good terms, and I was satisfied.

Fifteen days passed without my receiving letters from Brittany. At length, my Mistress wrote me the prettiest things in the world

world upon the subject of my picture. The success of Felix's negociation advanced him in my good graces.

Being in a pretty calm situation of mind, with respect to my love, I began to think of the business that had brought me to Paris. I went to deliver the letters which I had brought to different noblemen at Court. They received me politely, and promised to do a great deal more for me than I asked, and did a great deal less.

I was expecting the effect of their powerful solicitations, when Monsieur de Florian arrived. He was an old gentleman of great wisdom and merit. His rank and services were as yet recent in the memory of every one, and procured him a general esteem. I was the more surpris'd at it, as I was not ignorant that it is very little, or not at all, the custom to respect men of figure in the world, when they have ceased to render themselves respectable. My affairs put on a different face the moment he arrived at Court, and I soon obtained a pair of colours in the regiment of French guards, in which I have served ever since.

If my father's friends were displeas'd that I was provided without lying under any obligation to them, Madam de Rillac was quite mad when she learned that Monsieur de Florian

Florian alone had rendered me this service. She had likewise solicited for me, but to very little purpose, her riches giving her more ease than credit in the world. She became in a manner furious, and pushed her folly to such a pitch, as to do what in her lay to make me miserable in an affair so interesting.

She had money, which my father had put into her hands for me, begging she would let me have it when I had occasion. She refused me the expences which I was obliged to be at upon this occasion. Monsieur de Florian extricated me out of my embarrass, by procuring me, in loan, all that I wanted, till such time as I had writ to my father. We both of us received almost every post letters from his daughter, who had remained alone in the country. My passion for her augmented daily, and my only study was how to make it successful. I was even without great uneasiness upon this affair, not being able to imagine that my father would forfeit his word with Monsieur de Florian, to whom I had so many conspicuous obligations. I did not know that Madam de Rillac had ascribed to herself the honour of procuring for me the place that I had obtained, and of which she had all the merit in Brittany, particularly in my mother's opinion, unfortunately for me.

New

New projects for my marriage with this Lady were set on foot, and still without my participation. They only waited for Monsieur de Florian's return to Brittany, to play off all the engines they thought necessary to bring an affair of such importance to bear. He arrived too soon for me at his country-seat. This father, so tender (I make no difficulty to give him this name, which he deserved in all respects) found himself fatigued with the manner of living at Paris, and above all at Court. He left me after having remained six months with me, and promising always that he would make me happy in the possession of his daughter. I felt more grief on our separation now, than I had in taking leave of my Mistress when I left the country. To see me pouring out a torrent of tears, when I embraced him, it might have been thought that I had a sort of foresight of never seeing him more. He found himself, upon his arrival, extremely fatigued with his journey, he took his bed, a fever ensued, and conducted him to his grave in fifteen days.

Great care was taken to conceal this misfortune from me, and I knew nothing of it till long after it happened. I had remained alone at Paris more than a year, keeping company with a great many people, viz.

Officers

Officers, and some friends I had while a child, and with whom I renewed acquaintance. The most pungent and oppressive grief accompanied me every where. I received no more letters from Mademoiselle de Florian; though I continued to write to her regularly. In all my letters to my father I asked news of her, and his answers were, that she was in good health, and nothing more. I was horribly teized on the subject of my marriage with Madam de Rillac. My continued refusals provoked my mother, and she influenced my father against me, so that I had no more letters from either of them. I could think of no expedient, but to go and throw myself at their feet. This measure seemed to me to be the most proper, because it flattered my love, and gave me an opportunity of being fully apprised of my misfortune, if any thing disagreeable had happened to the Count or his daughter. As I was obliged to do my duty exactly, and, besides, as I was young, and but lately entered into the service, it was my business to make my court assiduously; all these considerations made the execution of my project almost impossible. I at last determined to send my Marseilles servant Felix to Britany. He accepted with joy the commission, and set out with letters to my parents, to the Count and to his daughter. I flattered myself

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self

self with having found a remedy to my misfortunes by employing a method so certain of knowing how affairs stood.

Felix returned, and told me that my father and mother were greatly enraged against me, and had ordered him to tell me so; both of them refusing absolutely to write to me. Their inflexibility affected me greatly, I hoped love would mitigate my pain; but alas! what became I, when I understood that the Count and his daughter were no longer in Brittany, but gone to Provence, where it was reported, that Mademoiselle de Florian was married!

I gave credit the more readily to what Felix told me, as the silence which had been kept with me during the space of a whole year, seemed to be a proof of my misfortune. I was strongly tempted to make the same messenger go and visit Provence, in quest of my perfidious Mistress, but I soon reflected that such an enquiry could be of no use to me.

War was declared, the King's household marched. I took the field plunged in an abyss of grief, and fully resolved to take all opportunities of getting rid of a life which was become insupportable.

I shall not relate the success of our arms, as it has no connection with my private affairs,

fairs, of which alone I design to inform you. I shall only beg leave to tell you, that I executed my project by exposing my life more than perhaps I had occasion. In two campaigns I received five wounds; the last was the most considerable. A shot broke my arm in two different places, and I suffered all that can be suffered, to obtain a cure. One thing supported me under the torments of the operations, viz. the hopes of death fortified by the assiduous and melancholy care that was taken of me, which made me judge that they were extremely apprehensive of my death, and I was overjoyed when I was told that I must prepare for it. I asked for a Priest; happily for me one came who did not as yet know his trade enough, to use the expeditious manner in which people are treated in the army. I found he had wit; few talents, to speak the truth, for his state, but nevertheless he had, in my opinion, some merit. His sweetness pleased me, and I related to him, at the same time, the history of my life, and an exact confession of all my crimes. I took his promise that, after the campaign, he would go to Provence, and inform Mademoiselle de Florian of my death; and promised that I would take care he should be handsomely rewarded for his trouble. On mentioning her name he cried out that I was certainly deceived;

deceived; and assured me that Monsieur de Florian died upon his return from Paris about three years before; that his daughter was not married in Provence, nor had she ever been there, and that he believed she was at Paris. I told him that I had sufficient authority to confirm me in the belief of what I had said to him. I ought to know these things better than you, Sir, answered he, and when you know me you will no longer doubt of it. I am of Brittany, son to Mademoiselle de Florian's farmer. I was Vicar in the village when the Count returned from Paris, and he expired in my arms. Some time after, Mademoiselle de Florian, having settled all her affairs herself (for, you must know, she was then at age) went from her country seat, from whence my father writes me that she is at Paris. I can assure you that she neither was married, nor to any appearance had any thoughts of entering into that state, when curiosity made me come here. She did me the honour of admitting me often to converse with her, and mentioned you sometimes, as a man whom she had greatly loved, and whom reason alone made her forget, being convinced of your infidelity by your silence.

The End of the First VOLUME,